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'THERE IS A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE IN THE MODI GOVERNMENT'

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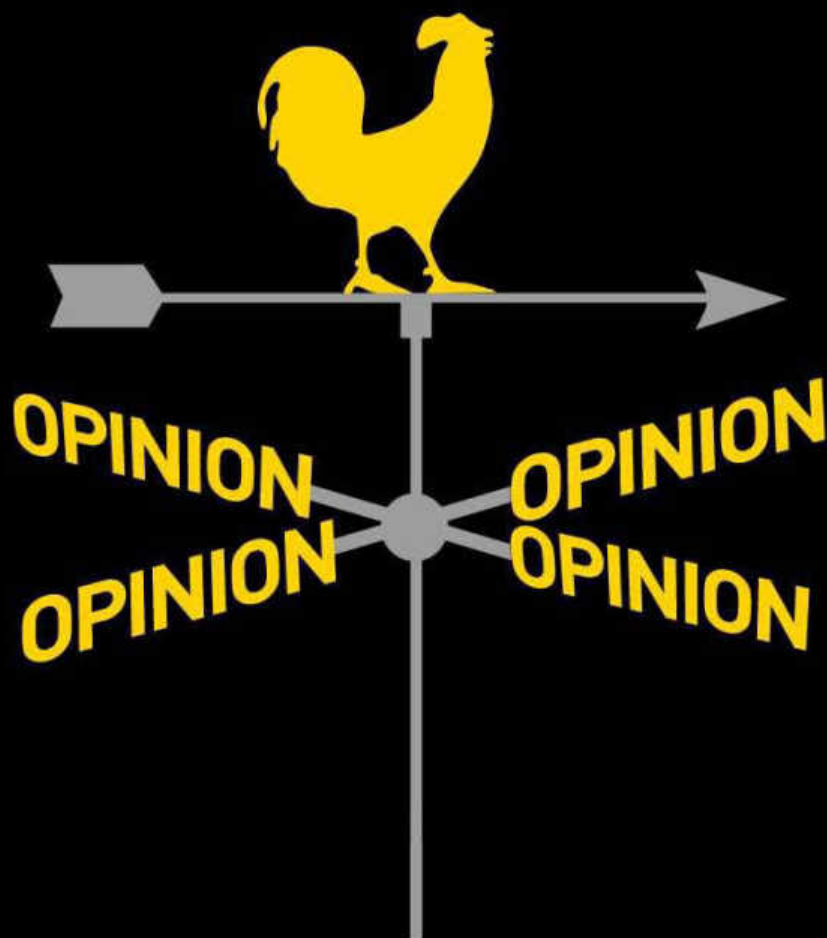
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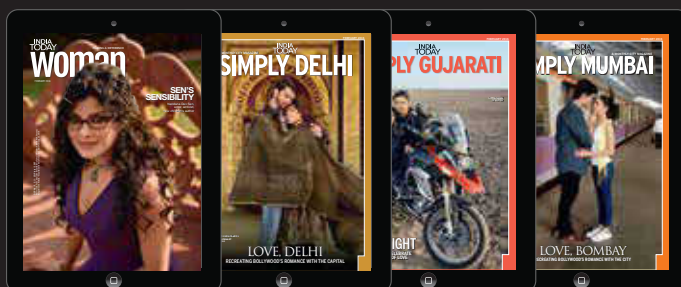


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Volume XLI Number 8; For the week  
February 16-22, 2016, published on every Friday

• Editorial Office Living Media India Ltd., India Today Group Mediaplex,  
FC-8, Sector-16A, Film City, Noida - 201301; Phone: 0120-4807100  
• Subscriptions: For assistance contact Customer Care India Today Group, A-61,  
Sector-57, Noida (UP)-201301; Phones: Toll-free number: 1800 1800 100 (from  
BSNL/MTNL lines); (05120) 2479900 from Delhi and Faridabad; (0120) 2479900  
from Rest of India (Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.); Fax: (0120) 4078080;  
Mumbai: 022-66063411/3412, Kolkata: 033-40525327, Chennai: 044-24303200;  
e-mail: [recare@indiatoday.com](mailto:recare@indiatoday.com)

• Sales: Direct all trade enquiries to General Manager (Sales), Living Media India  
Limited, B-45, Sector 57, Noida-201301 (UP)

• Regd. Office: K-9 Connaught Circus, New Delhi-110001

• Impact Offices: 1201, 12th Floor, Tower 2 A, One Indiabulls Centre, (Jupiter  
Mills), S.B. Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400013; Phone: 66063355;

Fax: 66063226 • E-1, Ground Floor, Videocon Towers, Jhandewalan Extn,  
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Panchwati, Office C.G. Road, Ahmedabad-380006; Phone: 26560393, 26560929;

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Printed and published by Ashish Kumar Bagga on behalf of

Living Media India Limited. Printed at Thomson Press India Limited,

18-35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Road, Faridabad-121007, (Haryana)

and at A-9, Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar, District

Kancheepuram-603209, (Tamil Nadu). Published at K-9, Connaught

Circus, New Delhi-110001. Editor: Aroon Purie.

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## FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Among the principal characters that the horrific 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks threw up—the puppet master Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi, the brutal foot soldier Ajmal Kasab, and the reconnaissance expert David Headley aka Daood Gilani—it was the latter who was the most intriguing. An agent of terror who set the scene while living under assumed identities, mingling with locals, and cutting deals with multiple interest groups.

During his trial in the United States, in which he got 35 years in prison in 2013 through a plea bargain that ensured he escaped the death penalty, extradition to India and even life imprisonment in exchange for information on terror networks, the presiding judge, Harry Leinenweber, summed Headley up perfectly when he said, “He commits crimes, cooperates, and then gets rewarded for the cooperation.”


Headley’s deposition in the 26/11 case, conducted this week via a video link from the US, has provided India with actionable evidence and on-the-record information that indisputably exposes Pakistan’s direct hand in cross-border terrorism. It is different from Kasab’s deposition because while he was a foot soldier with little knowledge of larger plans, Headley has had deeper interactions with top strategists. What Headley has told Indian officials reveals direct linkages between the Pakistan army’s ISI and networks such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Over the course of his deposition, Headley exposed the Pakistani deep state for all to see. The Pakistani deep state, as revealed by Headley, is a web of the army, the intelligence wing, and terror groups that almost forms a parallel regime in which the military is not just funding terror groups but also handling brainwashed terror operatives like obedient lapdogs.

What makes his confessions all the more significant for India is that the Modi government, which has been trying to build bridges with Pakistan, has been pegged back repeatedly by state-sponsored terror. The attacks on Pathankot, Jammu and Gurdaspur in recent months, coupled with the deniability of the Pakistani state, have created a scenario in which making headway has become extremely difficult. Now, Headley’s deposition could finally end Pakistan’s deniability. The Headley confessions should allow India to build a watertight case against state-sponsored terror by Pakistan, a first step towards delivering justice for the 166 people killed in Mumbai.

Our cover story, written by Deputy Editor Sandeep Unnithan who has been investigating terror networks for over a decade and is the author of the acclaimed book, *Black Tornado: The Three Sieges of Mumbai 26/11*, makes sense of the Headley testimony. We tie together the various strands that Headley throws up, and look at how India can use his deposition to call Pakistan out. We also have columns by noted Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir on how Headley’s revelations have been viewed across the border, and India’s former high commissioner to Pakistan Satyabrata Pal on how the deposition could change India’s engagement with Pakistan.

Also in this issue, former prime minister Manmohan Singh breaks his silence for the first time since he was voted out of power in 2014. In an exclusive interview with Senior Writer Jyoti Malhotra, Manmohan slams the Modi government for its handling of Pakistan and for its inability to get the economy back on track. Often criticised for not speaking enough during his tenure, Manmohan, ironically, criticises Modi for being silent on key issues. “Whether it is the beef problem or whether it is what happened in Muzaffarnagar, he (Modi) has kept quiet,” he says. Manmohan offering strong views on governance, and particularly on the economy on the eve of the Budget session, suggests that the deep divide between the government and the opposition is far from being bridged. It’s déjà vu.

  
(Aroon Purie)



OUR FEBRUARY  
2013 COVER



COVER STORY

HEADLEY

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The 26/11 planner's video-linked testimony nails the role of his former associates in the LeT and Pakistan's ISI, giving India a water-tight case

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The former PM pulls up the Modi govt on its flip-flops on Pakistan, the state of the economy in an exclusive interview to Jyoti Malhotra, the first since he demitted office

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In his new avatar, Congress scion Rahul Gandhi is keen to assume new identities, seek new alliances, broker peace among the old guard in a bid to win over poll-bound states

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The premium hatchbacks still look pretty but India's hot and heavy affair with the SUV is what has the world purring. Expect a rash of launches for every budget.



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Cover Photo Imaging by  
**AMARJEET SINGH NAGI**

# All Sexed Up

FEBRUARY 8, 2016

What India Thinks About Sex



“Despite a growing number of men and women coming out of their shells in sexual matters, a majority still prefer a monogamous relationship.”

ASHWANI K. MALHOTRA, *Ludhiana*

## Love, Laboured

Your sex survey is a sad reflection of the sexual reality in India (*The Great Indian Orgy*). Sex is no longer about pleasure, it is more about power. Hence the growing number of rapes and other sexual crimes in the country. Unfortunate that a country which gave the world the *Kama Sutra* should not know what to do with its rich heritage and instead bring a blight on the culture by forgetting how to respect its women.

VIJAY VINOD KUMAR, *via FB*

Wasn't it the inimitable George Bernard Shaw who said, "Marriage is a ghastly public confession for strictly private reasons." Affairs of the bedroom should stay in the bedroom, methinks. Public display of affection is not part of Indian culture, it is an import from the West, and aping it blindly will get us absolutely nowhere.

S.R. DEVAPRAKASH, *Tumkur*

I have been a regular

## An Unhealthy Obsession



It is intriguing to see articles on Rohith Vemula's suicide being churned out almost everyday but not a word being said or written about the suicides/deaths of three 19-year-old girls, studying at the SVS Yoga Medical College in Villupuram. Is it because the girls were

not Dalits? Educational institutions must redefine the parameters of campus activism and limit it to student-related issues. Controversial subjects such as the hanging of a rapist or terrorist should be left to debating societies. Most of the Dalit associations are doing disservice to Dr Ambedkar's ideology by supporting anti-national elements.

PADMINI RAGHAVENDRA, *Secunderabad*

reader of *INDIA TODAY* for the last 25 years. Most of your articles are extremely informative and up-to-date. Your last 13 sex surveys have been eye-openers but regrettably replete with stereotypes. The 2016 edition, however, brings some hope. There is a healthy dose of humour

and playfulness, and the figures and photographs are a refreshing and eye-catching change.

M.C. AGARWAL, *via e-mail*

Deja vu, yet again. Two points that Sex Survey 2016 repeats: sex before marriage and extra-marital sex. Do these become

okay because a majority of the people surveyed are indulging in them? Would we be fine if a majority of the children in the future are born out of wedlock? I dread to think of such an outcome. We have always had the *Kama Sutra*, but sex was never publicised the way it is today. Almost all newspapers carry pictures of semi-clad women.

NAISHADH DIWANJLI, *Ahmedabad*

With reference to your story *Why Women Won't Settle For Less*, there is a good number of women today who are writing erotic, soft-porn novels. It is now proved that sex is not always on the minds of men but preoccupy women as well. Do you know that both *Penthouse* and *Debonair* have been through women editors? It is a misconception that men obsess more about sex than women. A woman is four times more passionate than a man but can exercise eight times more control. Therein lies the rub.

MAHESH KUMAR, *Delhi*



## No Man's House

Both the dissidents within the party and Opposition are responsible for the stalemate in the sensitive border state of Arunachal Pradesh, but the problem has been compounded by Chief Minister Nabam Tuki's hesitation to diffuse the crisis because he lacks the confidence to win over the dissidents (*No More House Calls*). Under these circumstances, President's Rule is an apt course of action. However, the Congress, instead of crying foul and casting aspersions on the Opposition, should instead try to convince the chief minister to prove his majority in the House, by convening the assembly at the earliest.

K.R. SRINIVASAN, *Secunderabad*

Just when the country has finished celebrating its 67th Republic Day, politicians have displayed yet again that they have no respect for constitutional conventions. The central government's move to impose President's Rule in Arunachal Pradesh will have major political repercussions, as once again, the BJP has united the Opposition and given it a legitimate reason for protests ahead of the crucial Budget session in Parliament. There is no doubt about a political crisis in the state, with



## Missing Link

Apropos *Why Politics Won't Allow Bose to RIP*, many, including members of Netaji's family, refuse to accept that he died in a plane crash. They believe he spent years incarcerated in a Soviet camp disguised as Gumnaami Baba. Many others, especially those in the Nehruvian camp, assert that he indeed died in the plane crash. Political compulsions have put on hold the truth of one of the most mysterious stories of the world.

RAMESH SINHA, *Gurgaon*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has surely fulfilled his promise to Netaji's family about declassifying his files. However, it would have been better had the whole bunch been released together, helping the government evade criticism that the periodic release was politically motivated. To bring closure to the saga, the government needs to bring back the necessary files from all over the world. Since Bose belongs to a bygone era, there is no reason that the files in different countries could damage India's relations with them.

K. S. JAYATHEERTHA, *Bengaluru*

chief minister Tuki's government having lost majority. However, the constitutional remedy is to convene the assembly and vote out the minority government.

J.S. ACHARYA, *Hyderabad*

## Chinese Flu

Apropos *Sorry Wrong Numbers*, India might be doing better than China in terms of the growth rates they espouse, but there is a flip side to it. China is a larger-sized economy—more than three times that of India—and when there is a problem in the markets there, it is inevitable that the shocks are felt here as well. Indian markets cannot insulate themselves from turbulence either in the Chinese or in the Western markets. It is part of the price one has to pay for being integrated with the world economy. It might sound like a burden, but it brings enormous opportunities as well. When the world economy turns around—though signs of revival are very faint right now—then the Indian economy will reap the benefits in terms of greater exports, increased forex earnings and creation of jobs at home. The supply-demand fluctuations that mark a market economy cannot be wished away.

MEGHANA A., *New South Wales*

## Manmohan Singh: What Can He Do?

*I, Manmohan Singh, do swear in the name of God..." rang the soft voice across Ashoka Hall. For a person who has spent a lifetime dealing with rational theories and irrational expectations it did seem intriguing that the prime minister should swear in the name of God. You could say it was obeisance to the Almighty for the providential rise of destiny's child, for he is a God-fearing man. You could also say that India's most appointed economist-turned-politician is prescient, even prophetic. He knows that he will need divine intervention more often—both from his temporal leader now bestowed with a saintly aura and the power of the infinite above—if he has to steer this ark. Clichés would wear thin if Manmohan Singh were to describe his first 72 hours after being sworn in as prime minister of India. It was never going to be easy. Always nominated, not yet elected, he was after all the afterthought of an inner voice. Nor can he escape the fact that there were at least two pretenders—both party colleagues—to the crown. The baptism was virtually by fire. Barely a few hours into the top job, cacophony ushered in the first crisis. Congress leaders Arjun Singh and M.L. Fotedar conducted the first reshuffle even before the cabinet of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was formed as they shunted Pranab Mukherjee out of Home Affairs to the Ministry of Defence. The coup, which delayed portfolio allocation by over three hours, was a classic Congress operation.*

by Shankkar Aiyar

June 7, 2004



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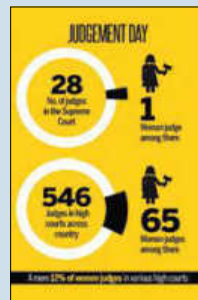
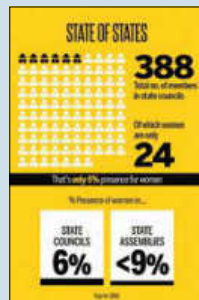
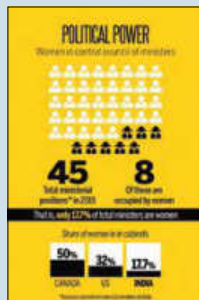
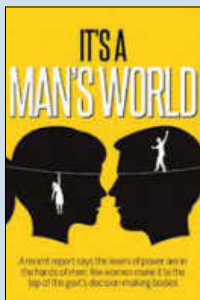
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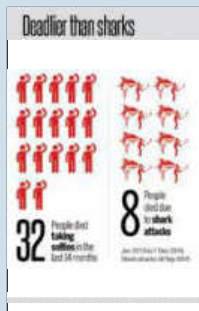
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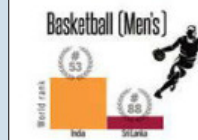
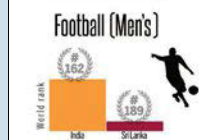
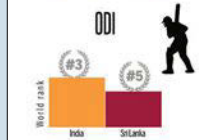
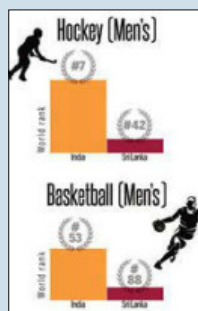
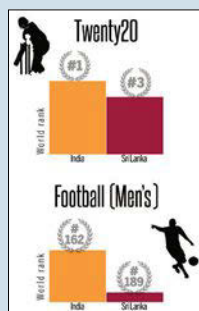
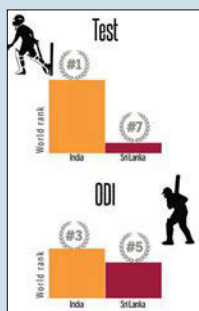
**The Last Selfie** looks at how a selfie addiction can sometimes prove fatal, indeed even more so than a horrific shark attack

<http://www.newsflicks.com/story/the-last-selfie-revised>



**Can Sri Lanka beat us at any sport?** highlights the winning crown India wears against its neighbour, Sri Lanka, at almost every sport. Well, almost.

<http://www.newsflicks.com/story/can-sri-lanka-beat-us-at-any-sport>



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Muslim family raises a Hindu boy and then gets him married to a Hindu girl 11,741

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LJP leader whose son fought election against Tejaswi killed near Patna 258



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Indian Premier League 2016: Complete team list 81,141

## ALONG WINTER

General V.K. Singh's cold war with present army chief General Dalbir Singh is no secret. It has now spilled over into indifference towards other serving army brass as well. When he arrived to lay a wreath at the funeral of Lt General J.F.R. Jacob in the Delhi Cantonment on January 14, the MoS for external affairs greeted the ministers seated near the pyre, but ignored the army chief and his generals. He did it again at the funeral of former army chief General K.V. Krishna Rao at Delhi Cantt on January 31, where the ex-army chief once again refused to acknowledge the current chief or the army brass.



Illustration by SAURABH SINGH



## KERALA'S GOVERNATOR

Kerala's embattled CM Oommen Chandy may be secretly thanking PM Modi for sending former CJI P. Sathasivam as Kerala governor. Sathasivam's stern directive recently defused protests by the Opposition in the state assembly. The latter were intent on disrupting the gov's address in the concluding-session of the House when he sternly asked Opposition leader V.S. Achuthanandan to either sit or leave. Achumama chose to leave quietly.

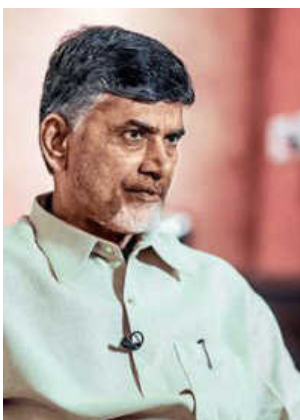
## RETIRED HURT

Three-time BJP MP from Punjab Navjot Singh Sidhu recently skipped a meeting of the core group of the BJP at Union finance minister Arun Jaitley's residence. The February 6 meeting was to decide on whether to continue the alliance with the Shiromani Akali Dal. Sidhu was invited, but declined to attend. He has refused to attend any party meeting until the BJP breaks its alliance with the Akali Dal.



## TRANSIT SECRETARIAT

Andhra Pradesh chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's plan to move out all government offices from Hyderabad by June 2, the second anniversary of the division of the state from Telangana, has gone somewhat awry. Having failed to find adequate office space, he is to build a temporary secretariat—six lakh square feet on 20 acres at a cost of Rs 180 crore—at Velagapudi and Malkapuram, which are among the 29 villages to be developed as Amaravati, the new capital. Naidu will lay the foundation stone, as soon as a developer is chosen from among the bidders.



GETTY IMAGES

## BRAND WAR

War of words currently under way between the CM and former CM

"Kumaraswamy bought his son a Rs 5-crore Hummer."

SIDDARAMAIAH  
Karnataka CM



"Socialist Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah's sunglasses cost Rs 10 lakh, watch is worth Rs 50 lakh."

H.D. KUMARASWAMY Janata Dal  
(Secular) leader

## STANDING COMMITTEE

Murmurs have begun within the BJP over a picture circulated on social media that shows organisational general secretary Ramlal standing even as PM Narendra Modi and party president Amit Shah are seated. The picture was taken when Shah led a delegation of party cells in-charge to meet the PM at 7, RCR. Party insiders perceive a slight. Ramlal, they say, is not only elder to Shah, he also holds a post that is above other general secretaries. He also represents the RSS within the party.







## MODI MEETS THE JUGGERNAUT

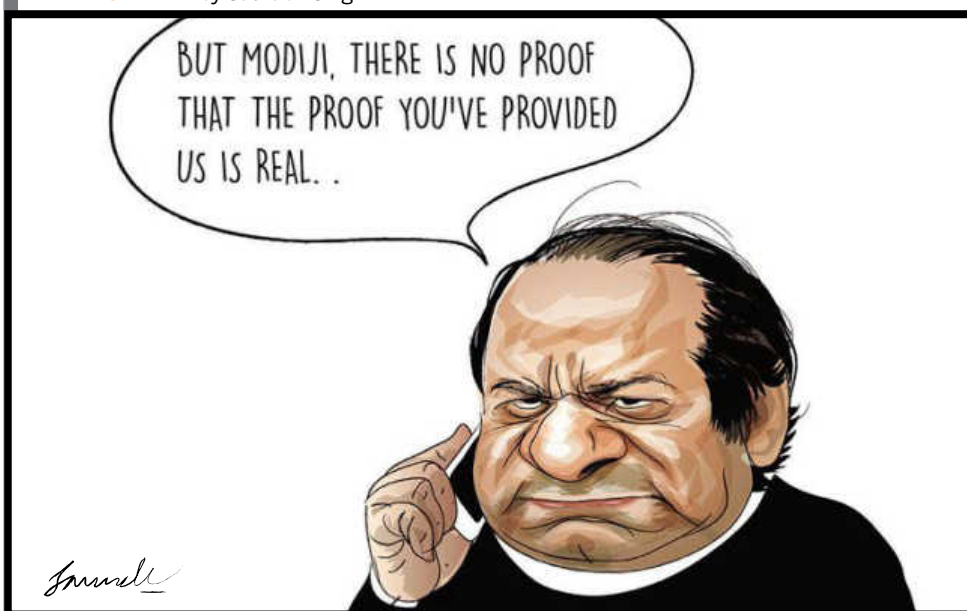
**P**M Narendra Modi met his family priest Raghunath Kochikar during a visit to the Jagannath temple in Puri during his recent tour of Odisha. The priest has maintained the Modi family's records for generations now. The PM spent half an hour worshipping inside the sanctum sanctorum, where the general public are not allowed.

## CAPTAIN'S HIGH COMMAND



**P**unjab Congress chief **Capt Amarinder Singh** is on a poaching spree, grabbing leaders from all rival parties, even AAP. But he still has a ready alibi to fob off ticket-seekers, saying he's only a "recommending authority".

**FREE FOR ALL** by Saurabh Singh



## BREAD 'N BUTTER ISSUES



YASBANT NEGI

**M**Ps trooping into Parliament for the Budget session will find a drastically pruned food menu. Parliament's food management committee chairman A.P. Jithender Reddy has eliminated food and beverage subsidies, slashing the menu from 140 to 43 items, with only 25 on the list served daily. Except for bread and butter, which cost just Rs 5, he has bumped up the price of all other items. The Hyderabad mutton biryani that he introduced last year after sending seven cooks to train at the Nizam Club in Hyderabad, is up 20 per cent to Rs 60 while a plate of idlis is now Rs 15, a 300 per cent jump from the Rs 4 earlier. To reduce complaints, though, he's ensured all food is served hot. Room service is being restricted to a select few.

## FORGOTTEN SANGHI

**T**he Sangh parivar is unhappy that the Padma awards ignored Mumbai-based philanthropist **Anandshankar Pandya**, 95. Diamond merchant Pandya, a Gandhian, and Sangh supporter, funded its Gandhian-type schemes, earning the moniker Bhamashah, a merchant who supported Rana Pratap. The slight has added Pandya to the list of names that the BJP has forgotten after its 2014 victory.



## THE WEEK IN TWITTER

A meet-the-CM quiz, an angry man on angry trolls and some pixel trouble



### MEET THE CM

The top prize for a Twitter quiz on government schemes started by the UP government is a personal meeting with CM **Akhilesh Yadav**



### ANGRY RAGA

Congress V-P **Rahul Gandhi** says that people trolling him on Twitter had been abusing his family for years and were also "killers of the Mahatma"



### GOGOI GAFFE

Assam CM **Tarun Gogoi** met Pak high commissioner Abdul Basit but tweeted a photo with ex-Goa CM Digambar Kamat

with ANSHUMAN TIWARI, JEEMON JACOB, AMARNATH K. MENON, KAUSHIK DEKA, ASHISH MISRA, SANTOSH KUMAR, UDAY MAHURKAR, ARAVIND GOWDA



# TRANS-PACIFIC THREAT

In Auckland, on February 4, the most voluminous trade deal in history, comprising over 5,000 pages of text, was signed formally by the 12 nations that are party to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The TPP agreement covers 30 different chapters addressing issues like non-tariff barriers (NTBs), labour, environment, investment, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and regulatory coherence which have not been adequately tackled in the WTO. The TPP needs to be ratified by all the 12 countries by February 4, 2018, but even if that fails, it will still come into force if it is ratified by at least six countries representing a minimum of 85 per cent of the combined GDP of the partners. It means that the TPP can get implemented if just the US, Japan and four other countries ratify it.

Will TPP affect India? To answer, consider its provisions. First, with import tariffs in developed countries having reduced to 4 per cent or less, tariffs are no longer as important. NTBs have become increasingly important determinants of trade flows. The TPP attempts to reduce or eliminate NTBs and lay down procedures for Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) of standards and Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs). This will go a long way towards reducing NTBs among partners, enhancing the competitiveness of their producers. Second, barring a few exceptions, almost all products will be importable from other partners at zero duty. TPP non-members would face tariff barriers, thereby affecting their competitiveness. Third, with the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, all LDCs, will also likely become part of TPP. Thus TPP will have several lower cost producers than India. Fourth, due to the emphasis on regulatory coherence and harmonising “behind the border measures”, the transaction cost of doing business among enterprises in partner countries would get reduced substantially. This would lead to greater geographical clustering of industries, even if they are in different countries, signalling closer integration with global value chains. Fifth, given the cost advantages of being part of TPP, there would be trade diversion from non-partners to partner countries. Since trade and investment flows are interlinked, it would mean investment diversion too.

What can India do to overcome these disadvantages? Joining the TPP is not an option in the short run as we still need time to carry out a number of reforms to fulfil the tough commitments required. Closer integration with the Asian region through an ambitious and early outcome in the Regional Cooperation and Economic

Partnership (RCEP) agreement negotiations and conclusion of FTAs with the EU, Australia and Canada could mitigate part of the problem. Africa, the fastest growing region, has been left out of TPP, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and RCEP. Concluding the SACU FTA and other FTAs with groups of African regional groupings could also be beneficial.

Simultaneously, focus on the following: first, accelerate the development of a few niche areas of manufacturing and services where India has comparative advantage; second, emphasise skill development and improve productivity in these sectors to be globally competitive; third, improve the ease of doing business and reduce transaction costs, both at and behind the border, to attract FDI and technology and integrate more easily with the global value chain; fourth, improve and align our standards with those in the major markets and strongly push for MRAs on standards and CABs with counterparts. The silver lining is that some of our recent initiatives such as Make in India, Skill India and Start-Up India are geared toward bridging these critical gaps in our economy. We need to get these programmes up and running, and fast.

To understand how TPP benefits us, consider its history. TPP negotiations started in 2008 with the US in the driving seat. Australia, Brunei, Chile and Singapore were the initial partners; Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru and Vietnam joined subsequently. The growing US interest in TPP coincided with its increasing disinterest in the Doha Development Agenda and the WTO process of reaching trade agreements by consensus. It was part of US President Barack Obama’s ‘Pivot to Asia’.

TPP and TTIP partners represent about 40 per cent and 50 per cent of global GDP and about 25 per cent and 33 per cent of global trade respectively. Since the US is common to both, there is bound to be great harmony between the TPP and TTIP provisions with a likely integration of the two. This would effectively cement the trading rules among nations with 70 per cent GDP.

China, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand are keen to join the TPP. The US did not allow China to join because it feared Beijing would dilute many of the provisions such as SOEs. Now that TPP has been signed, China and others are likely to be allowed in. With these five countries joining a potential TPP-TTIP integrated agreement, the global share of GDP of this bloc would be close to 80 per cent.

*The author is a former Indian ambassador to the World Trade Organisation.*

Illustration by SAURABH SINGH



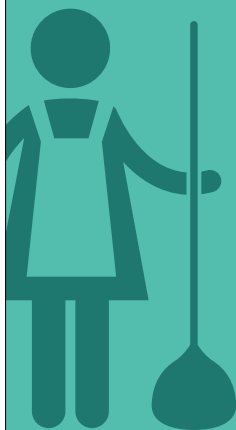
**If India can't join the TPP, what can it do to overcome the disadvantages? Integrate closely with the Asia region, conclude FTAs with EU, Australia, Canada, as well as the African regional blocs.**



# MAID IN RAJASTHAN

THE DESERT STATE SETS A MINIMUM WAGE LIMIT FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS—A FIRST IN THE COUNTRY

## EQUAL TREATMENT



**8 hours/day**  
set as work hours for domestic helps

**Overtime**  
in case they are made to work extra

**₹5,642/month**  
for all chores, including cooking, washing, babysitting, etc

**₹705/month**  
for dishes and laundry in a family of four

**10% more per head**  
in bigger families

Plus food, accommodation, clothes and other perks for live-in domestic helps

## WHY IT MATTERS

Domestic helps work for a pittance



**₹130.16 PER DAY**

Average salary of a domestic worker in India

For maids, it's worse



**₹96.8/day**  
Avg daily wage of **female** domestic workers



**₹202.93/day**  
Avg daily wage of **male** domestic workers

In the age group 15-59 years

## NON-STOP WORK

Only 10 per cent employers allow four monthly offs to their domestic helps

Share of employers (%)



**4%**



**75%**



**8%**



**10%**



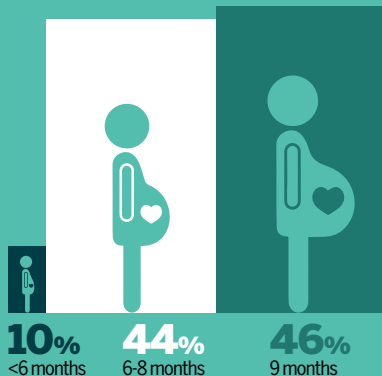
**3%**



## POOR WORK CONDITIONS

**46%** pregnant domestic workers were found to work till the ninth month of their pregnancy

Share of employers (%)



Source: Jagori study 'Domestic workers: Conditions, rights and responsibilities'; figures based on results derived from the sample picked for the study

## GOVT APATHY

**41.33 LAKH**

Estimated number of domestic workers in 2011-12

But official reports contradict each other

Household workers as % of total employed workers

**0.8%**

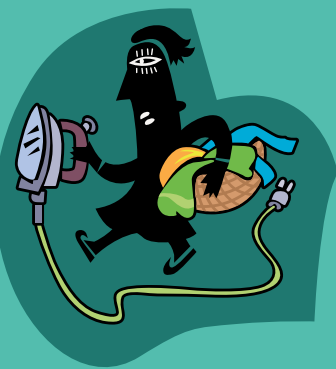
According to NSSO, 2011



**2.7%**

According to ministry of labour, 2010

This shows the low importance given to collecting information about domestic workers



Rajasthan's decision might be a beginning in recognising the rights of millions of domestic workers







■  
**Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and the Lashkar-e-Taiba worked in coordination with each other**

■  
**ISI provided financial, military and moral support to terror organisations Jaish-e-Mohammed, LeT and Hizbul Mujahideen**

■  
**Every LeT leader was 'handled' by a serving Pakistan army officer from the ISI**

■  
**LeT needed ISI approval for major decisions. Lakhvi said he needed to consult the intelligence agency for a lawsuit.**

■  
**LeT was determined to attack Mumbai, undeterred by two failed attempts in August 2008**

■  
**Headley had done a recce at the Siddhivinayak Temple and the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Mumbai for possible terror strikes**

—From the David Headley depositions

# DAVID HEADLEY CHASE

**The 26/11 scout and planner nails the role of his LeT associates and Pakistan's ISI**

| By Sandeep Unnithan |

**D**avid Coleman Headley returned to Mumbai nearly seven years after he boarded a flight to Chicago, never to return. Only this time he came back as a video signal beamed from halfway across the globe into a packed sessions courtroom in a city where he had helped plan the slaughter of 166 persons during the terror attacks of November 26, 2008.

Flanked by three US officials, the grey sweat-shirt-clad 55-year-old calmly unravelled the 26/11 conspiracy before the court for a week, beginning February 8. The Indian government's attempts to extradite Headley had come to an end when he was given a 35-year sentence for

terrorist acts by a US court in 2013.

The video link, a result of his turning approver last December in the ongoing trial of 26/11 plotter Abu Jundal, was the closest India's legal system could get to him. Headley went to work, like a needle knitting together all the missing threads of the 26/11 plot. He had soon woven a patchwork quilt of serving military personnel and hard-core terrorists, linked together by the bizarre compulsions of Pakistan's deep state in waging unending war against India. Some of the names he revealed in the deposition—Major Iqbal, his 'handler' within the ISI, and Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi's handler Brigadier Riyaz—had found mention earlier, during the week-long interrogation by police offi-

# PUPPETS ON THE ISI CHAIN

HEADLEY'S DEPOSITION BEFORE THE MUMBAI COURT OUTLINES THE LINKAGES BETWEEN PAKISTAN'S INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE AND TERRORIST GROUPS

THREE SERVING OFFICERS OF PAKISTAN'S ISI HANDLED KEY LASHKAR-E-TAIBA OPERATIVES AND WERE AWARE OF THE 26/11 CONSPIRACY



**BRIGADIER RIYAZ**

ISI handler of LeT commander Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, key plotter of November 26, 2008 attacks in Mumbai

**LT COLONEL HAMZA**

Major Iqbal's boss in the ISI

**COLONEL SHAH**

Major Abdur Rehman Pasha's handler in the ISI



**MAJOR SAMEER ALI**

ISI officer who contacted Headley in Lahore

**MAJOR IQBAL**

Headley's handler in the ISI. Serving Pakistan army officer.

**MAJOR ABDUR REHMAN HASHIM**

Retired Pakistan army officer who headed the ISI's 'Karachi Project' which carried out blasts across India



**DAVID COLEMAN HEADLEY**

Illustration by SAURABH SINGH

cials from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Chicago in 2010. But these statements had never been in a sworn deposition and in an open court, the reason why special public prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam is confident the statements will give a boost to the 26/11 case and allow the police to undertake further investigations.

Headley's deposition, relayed live into Special Judge G.A. Sanap's court on to a 52-inch flat screen LCD TV monitor from an undisclosed location in the US, was quid pro quo for the trial court pardoning him. It is a deposition unlike any other. Headley's LCD monitor angled at the right corner of the courtroom faced another identically arranged LCD screen showing a dispassionate Jundal flanked by a Mumbai police constable. An Indian citizen who was deported by Saudi Arabia in 2011, Jundal guided the two terrorists who struck at Nariman House, ensconced in the safety of the LeT's control room in Karachi. Jundal's electronic faceoff with his erstwhile accomplice is now, ironically, because of concerns over his safety.

## THE DEEP STATE

In his six-hour-long deposition, Headley closely detailed how the so-called 'non-state actors' like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) were closely allied with the deep state, notably Pakistan's hydra-headed Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The 26/11 carnage which the LeT executed was meant to be the perfect, "plausibly deniable" terror attack with no links to its perpetrators. A strike by 10 heavily armed men who died fighting, but used Indian SIM cards and carried ID cards that identified them as students of a Hyderabad college. But for the providential capture of Ajmal Kasab on the night of 26/11 and Headley's arrest in late 2009, the investigations would have hit a dead end. Headley's deposition now names four serving officials of the ISI—Brigadier Riyaz, Major Sameer Ali, Lt Colonel Hamza and Major Iqbal. His testimony now directly links the Pakistan army to the 26/11



GUEST COLUMN **HAMID MIR**

# THE PRINCE ON THE RACK

The media is silent, but Pakistan must know that probing Headley's links is in its interest

**D**avid Headley is making headlines in India but not in Pakistan. The terrorist-turned-approver, who allegedly surveyed targets for the 2008 Mumbai attacks, has told a special Indian court that he worked for Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence. The US national has also said that ISI provides financial, military and moral support to the Lashkar-e-Taiba. Surprisingly, the Pakistani government is silent, and all popular TV channels here have ignored his deposition. Common Pakistanis know Ajmal Kasab but they know little about Headley, who spent time at Cadet College Hasan Abdal in Attock, Punjab, and was referred to by its famous members as a "prince because of his fair skin".

Why has such a juicy story been ignored? Because it has become difficult for the Pakistani media to raise questions about the alleged dubious links of Headley with some elements in the powerful security establishment. Over 110 Pakistani journalists have lost their lives in the last few years in the line of duty, and a divided media is finding it hard to speak the truth because the federal government is weak and opposition groups are at odds with each other.

Former interior minister and Pakistan People's Party MP Rehman Malik addressed a press conference on February 9 in which he said that Headley had been planted by India, and was wanted in Pakistan for various acts of sabotage. "They (the US authorities) should hand him over to us and we will see how many confessions he makes," he said. Malik said the government was keeping mum on Headley's allegations because of India's defiance, so he, as chairman of the senate committee on interior, had to raise his voice. In other words, he was trying to protect the ISI while the Nawaz Sharif government was cowering in the face of the "lies" of Headley. Malik, of course, was trying to bridge the gap between his leader, Asif Ali Zardari, and the security establishment by using the Headley card. Zardari had slammed the army generals a few months ago in a public speech, and within days was forced to leave Pakistan because a process to involve him in murder and terror financing cases was started. Meanwhile, even as security agencies have been eager to arrest several PPP and Muttahida Quami Movement leaders, the alleged mastermind of the 26/11 attacks, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, was released from jail in 2015.

Will it now be easier for the Pakistani security agencies

to ignore the claims made by Headley in an Indian court? The answer is no, because Headley is not an Indian. He is a US citizen of Pakistani origin and he made all his claims while being in their custody. He clearly said he was in touch with Hafiz Saeed and Lakhvi in Pakistan. A majority of Pakistanis don't like people like Saeed who use the name of Islam and jihad to allegedly kill innocents. Not many supported Kasab in Pakistan but unfortunately no serious effort was made to initiate a joint and conclusive probe into the 26/11 attacks. Though an eight-member commission was allowed to travel to India in March 2013 to gather evidence, the lawyers were barred from cross-examining the four prosecution witnesses, including Kasab.

Pakistan must understand that a serious joint probe into the claims made by Headley will only help the country get rid of people who give a bad name to the ISI and defame the nation through acts of terror. It is the right of all Pakistani citizens to know how a drug smuggler like Headley came into contact with Saeed and some army officers. If he was a double agent planted by US intelligence, then surely he wasn't the only one. A thorough investigation can perhaps unmask a few more Headleys around Hafiz Saeed.

But there are also some weak links in Headley's story. He claims he came in contact with Al Qaeda's Ilyas Kashmiri in 2006-7. This is difficult to believe because Kashmiri had turned against

the Pakistan army and ISI in 2003. He had even organised attacks on them, and never trusted the people around Saeed.

The truth is, Pakistanis need to know about Headley. If we can move forward with a joint probe into the Pathankot attack, it'll make new headway in the 26/11 case as well. PM Sharif has repeatedly said he has no soft corner for those who use Pakistani territory to destabilise a neighbouring country. He wants to make a new beginning from Pathankot but a recent statement from India's defence minister Manohar Parrikar has created problems for him. Parrikar said he would not allow Pakistani investigators into the base. Even though his pace is slow, India should help Sharif make a new beginning. Headley's collaborators are also enemies of Pakistan. It is important that both countries jointly expose the collaborators of terrorist 'prince' David Headley.

GETTY IMAGES



NOT SO SOFT? PAK PM SHARIF

*Hamid Mir works for Geo TV Pakistan.*

Mumbai conspiracy. (Indian intelligence officials believe the ISI men used assumed names). Headley's deposition names these officers as handlers or officials who supervised and acted as go-betweens for the ISI and LeT. According to Headley, every significant LeT operative, even its supremo Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, had an ISI handler, thus blowing away any vestige of deniability that the Pakistan army was in the dark about the Mumbai attacks.

The LeT was clearly determined to attack Mumbai—the plan had been hatched in 2006, the year Headley changed his name and entered Mumbai to begin his deadly recce. For some reason, the LeT was obsessed about attacking the Taj Mahal Hotel. They used Headley's recce videos to prepare a mock-up of the hotel inside Pakistan in 2007. They planned to attack a group of defence scientists who were to meet there. How determined the group was to attack the city came out when Headley revealed how they had mounted two failed missions to infiltrate the same group of 10 terrorists into the city in August 2008. "It's clear there is a close nexus between the LeT and ISI," says special public prosecutor Nikam. Just how close, Headley would go on to reveal.

His testimony shows that the ISI was a ubiquitous presence among the LeT leadership. So there was Brigadier Riyaz, who handled LeT's military commander Zakiur-Rehman Lakhvi; Major Iqbal, Headley's handler in the ISI; and Iqbal's boss, Lt Colonel Hamza. All these officers are believed to be from the ISI's shadowy 'S' branch that handles terrorist groups and controls the agency's transborder operations.

How the son of a wealthy American socialite, Alice Serrill Headley, and Pakistani poet and diplomat Sayed Salim Gilani was sucked into the machinations of, and actively collaborated with, the deep state, is the stuff of a real-life Jason Bourne thriller. Born Daood Gilani, Headley had a troubled childhood and studied was

## STATE OF DENIAL

Delay, debunk and dilly-dally. This is how Pakistan reacts every time India presents it with evidence

### 1 MUMBAI SERIAL BLASTS, MARCH 12, 1993



India provides proof that the mastermind Dawood Ibrahim lives in Pakistan

#### STATUS

Pakistan yet to move on Interpol Red Corner notice on Ibrahim. Denies he lives there.

### 2 "MUMBAI TERROR ATTACKS, NOVEMBER 26, 2008



India requests voice samples to link Lakhvi and six LeT suspects to attacks

#### STATUS

Pakistan court strikes down demand for voice samples. Trial has made little progress.

### 3 GURDASPUR TERROR ATTACK, JULY 27, 2015



India's home ministry gives Pakistan a dossier, with evidence that three terrorists came from Pakistan

#### STATUS

Pakistan yet to act on it

### 4 JAMMU TERROR ATTACK, AUGUST 6, 2015



LeT terrorist Mohammed Naved captured alive by locals after attempting to shoot down BSF troopers. NIA probes case, establishes he is Pakistani national.

#### STATUS

Pakistan denies Naved is their national

### 5 PATHANKOT TERROR ATTACK, JANUARY 2, 2016



India shares information about involvement of Jaish-e-Mohammed mastermind Masood Azhar

#### STATUS

Pakistan yet to register a case or initiate action against JeM despite claiming it has

schooled at the Cadet College Hasan Abdal in Attock, Punjab. Later, in the 1980s, he had a decade-long stint smuggling heroin out of the Af-Pak 'Golden Crescent'. After multiple prison stints abroad, he returned to Pakistan sometime in the late 1990s as an agent for the US Drug Enforcement Administration. His proximity to Pakistan's terrorist groups began around 2002, when he began gathering information on the LeT and Al Qaeda after the 9/11 attacks. He trained as an LeT foot soldier and even volunteered to fight in Kashmir, but did not make the cut because of his age. He was, instead, chosen as a scout.

What makes Headley the Rosetta Stone of the 26/11 attacks is his unique position within the conspiracy. He worked with a bewildering array of actors, including the ISI, LeT and later on, even Al Qaeda. He was the ultimate double agent who changed his name at the behest of the LeT in 2006—assuming his mother's maiden name to live undercover as an American businessman in Mumbai while meticulously scouting the targets it wanted to attack: the Taj Mahal Hotel, Nariman House, Oberoi Hotel. Between 2006 and 2008, he made eight trips to Mumbai and Pakistan to contact his handlers and ISI officials and hand over recce photos and videos.

## OPTIONS BEFORE INDIA

Headley's deposition comes at a time when the government has watched the euphoria over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's December 25 visit to Lahore evaporate after the January 2 strike on the Pathankot air force base in which six Indian service personnel were killed, and the subsequent postponement of foreign secretary-level talks. India has linked talks to action on the Pathankot attacks. "The ball's in Pakistan's court," MEA spokesperson Vikas Swarup said. "The immediate issue is Pakistan's response to Pathankot after the actionable intelligence provided to it."

"Now after what happened (the Headley deposition), can Modi really go forward on talks with Pakistan? If the deep state is not with you, with

what face can you talk to Pakistan?" asks M.K. Narayanan, the NSA during the terror attacks.

The Pathankot attack is being investigated by the NIA, which has established that the attackers came from Pakistan, just like the attackers who struck at the police station in Gurdaspur last June or the two terrorists who attacked a BSF convoy in Jammu in August. The government has indicated that it will soon dispatch a fresh dossier to Pakistan, based on the Headley deposition. Whether this can actually make a difference to the multiple dossiers sent to Pakistan so

**KASAB'S TRIAL  
REVEALED ONLY ONE  
ASPECT OF 26/11. THE  
HEADLEY TESTIMONY  
HAS HELPED FULLY  
EXPOSE THE ISI HAND.**



far remains to be seen. Particularly since the Pakistan army, whose role Headley meticulously detailed, continues to call the shots and seems unwilling to halt the conveyor belt-like terror machinery it runs in its backyard.

"There is not much new in Headley's statement that the ISI was behind the Mumbai plot, but it is a useful reminder that the Pakistani army remains a patron of terrorists today," says Bruce Riedel, counter-terrorism expert and senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, Washington.

The Modi government watched with dismay as LeT military commander Lakhvi was bailed out of prison in April last year, among the final nails in the coffin of a trial that began in 2009 but has all but gone cold. Modi has raised the issue in meetings with his counterpart Nawaz Sharif. Pakistan has said it wants "more information and evidence" on the 26/11 attacks.

Of the three parallel 26/11 trials—the 2013 one in the US, where Headley was sentenced to 35 years in prison; the 2012 conviction and hanging of the sole surviving gunman, Ajmal Kasab; and the 2009 case registered by an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan, it's the last that has been slow to the point of death.

Indian investigators hope that the Headley revelations will uncover more evidence. "The Kasab investigation and trial had so far revealed only one dimension of the 26/11 attacks," says V. Balachandran, former special secretary, R&AW, and one of the investigators of the two-man Ram Pradhan Committee set up to probe the Mumbai police's responses to the attack. "We need Headley's testimony to fully understand Pakistan's conspiracy. This would enable us to mount international pressure on Pakistan," he says.

Delhi-based Supreme Court lawyer Surat Singh says Headley's deposition could be used for a prime facie case against Pakistan's involvement in sponsoring terrorism. "It could be used as a case of crimes against humanity in the International Court of Justice or even raised in the UN General Assembly," he says.

G. Parthasarathy, India's former high commissioner to Islamabad, is convinced the Headley deposition will meet the fate of every case of terror sponsorship against Pakistan (*see box*). "The time for soft options is over," he says. "India must raise the costs for Pakistan."

The Pakistan government has not issued a statement so far on Headley's deposition, but Rehman Malik, Pakistan's interior minister during the 26/11 attacks, dismissed them as a "pack of lies" and "fabricated statements". Malik claimed Headley was planted by Indian intelligence agencies for





# HOW TO SACRIFICE A PAWN

Headley is no clincher but Sharif can use it to shift Lakhvi case to military terror courts

David Headley's deposition before a Mumbai court may have caused quite a stir here but will ruffle few feathers in Islamabad. The gravamen of his charges—that he was recruited by the LeT, co-opted by the ISI, some of whose officers he met and has named, though these will be noms de guerre, and that the LeT received financial and material support from the ISI—is not new, for they have been in the public domain for years now. He has made these confessions to the US police, acknowledged them in a US court and presumably reiterated them with embellishments to the NIA team which was given access to him. This, therefore, is the fourth recension.

It is, of course, important that this statement is in an Indian court. Since under the Evidence Act, testimony to a policeman is not considered proven, what Headley told the NIA does not have the same legal weight. That is relevant only if the principal accused stand trial in an Indian court, which will not happen. India can compile a fresh dossier with Headley's deposition for Pakistan to consider, but it would argue that this would not bind a Pakistani court. India can urge Pakistan to get Headley to depose before one of their courts, but he will be subjected then to hostile cross-examination by defence lawyers, and he is in any case a most slippery customer. If he recants what he told the court in Mumbai, which he may well do, or fudges his responses, his confessions so far, which are one of the strongest planks of the case against Lakhvi and others, will be discredited. This is, therefore, a risky gambit.

Can Headley's evidence be put to any use at all to build a case in a Pakistani court against Hafiz Saeed and Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi? Unlikely, because even in his statement to our court, he has not directly linked either men to 26/11. The men he has named as his handlers for Mumbai have to be identified, before the government of Pakistan will consider lodging a case against them, and it is a foregone conclusion that they will claim that these were figments of Headley's imagination. We cannot establish that they exist.

If there is anyone losing sleep over Headley's deposition, it is not Saeed or Lakhvi or the shadowy Pashas and Iqbals, it is Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative he started with his detour to Lahore last December is in real jeopardy, because, so soon after Pathankot, on

which Pakistan seems to be relapsing into denial, the Indian public is being reminded about the even greater outrage of Mumbai, of the complicity of agents of the Pakistan state in it, and of the state's reluctance either to acknowledge this or to bring the culprits to book. Headley's testimony reopens the scab on an old wound. Modi might well believe that he has to wait for it to heal or at least to close before he can move ahead with Pakistan.

That might well be politically expedient, since a storm would break on him, from the Opposition and from sections of the media, if he did press on, but it would not be in India's best interests. As foreign secretary S. Jaishankar has argued recently in a speech, India has to remain engaged with Pakistan to try to get some satisfaction on its demands. The government should not let the uproar over Headley deflect it from that course.

This should be a spur for Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif to act, not because he is under pressure after Headley's deposition, but because his counterpart here is. And there is something he can very quickly do to prove Pakistan's bona fides and his interest in the re-engagement with India. The 21st amendment to its Constitution and a concomitant amendment to the Pakistan Army Act, enacted after the massacre in Peshawar in 2014, set up military courts for a period of two years to try terrorist offences. In August 2015, Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled that these amendments were valid in law.

Under them, acting with a speed and resolve (and disregard for legal niceties) that civil courts cannot match, these courts have already sentenced a large number of terrorists.

The law lays down that the federal government may transfer any case on a terrorist offence, pending before any court, to these courts. The offences they can try include creating "terror or insecurity in Pakistan or attempt to commit any of the said acts within or outside Pakistan". Sharif's government should demonstrate its authority, and its goodwill, by transferring the case against Lakhvi to a military court. That would serve several purposes, not the least of which would be to show if the army is prepared to sacrifice Lakhvi as a pawn, even if its goal remains checkmate, not peace.

*Satyabrata Pal is an ex-Indian high commissioner to Pakistan.*



FREE BIRD: LASHKAR'S LAKHVI

executing the Mumbai attacks and getting concocted statements from them. Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir says it will not be easy for Pakistani security agencies to ignore Headley's claims made in an Indian court. "Headley is not an Indian national. He is a US citizen of Pakistani origin and he made all his claims not in Indian custody but in US custody. He clearly said he was in touch with Hafiz Saeed and Lakhvi in Pakistan," he says (*see column*).

## A ROGUE MOLE?

One big mystery of the events leading up to 26/11 was partially solved in November 2010. The US was revealed to be the source behind the flood of intelligence alerts about attacks on Mumbai in the months preceding 26/11. Two years later, the US Directorate of National Intelligence (DNI) sent India's home ministry a report where it mentioned the US government had "aggressively and promptly provided the Indian government with strategic warnings regarding the LeT's threats to several targets in Mumbai between June and September 2008".

The warnings from the US were explicit. Between 2006 and 2008, the IB and R&AW received multiple intelligence alerts warning the Mumbai police of the LeT's preparations to infiltrate fidayeen suicide terrorists into the city through the sea route. By 2008, these alerts had reached an ominous crescendo. What was never clear was just how the US was getting such detailed alerts—the Pradhan committee set up to probe the Mumbai police's lapses in the 26/11 attacks mentioned a total of 26 intel alerts which warned of major attacks on hotels and public buildings in Mumbai.

Three alerts mentioned specific dates for terrorist attacks on Mumbai: August 20, 2006; May 24 and August 11, 2008. Six alerts spoke of the possibility of a seaborne attack, 11 of the possibility of simultaneous attacks, three even mentioned fidayeen attacks on these targets. The 'strategic warnings' the DNI mentioned last September, continued into November.

In 2013, former Central Intelligence



## TALKS WITH PAKISTAN WILL NOW AGAIN HINGE ON ITS RESPONSE TO THE PATHANKOT ATTACK AND THE INTELLIGENCE PROVIDED TO IT.

Agency (CIA) contractor Edward Snowden revealed that the agency had passed on an alert to R&AW on November 18, eight days before the actual attacks. The CIA based its alert on communications it intercepted between the LeT boat and the Lashkar's headquarters in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The CIA passed the alert to R&AW which passed it to the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard but not to the Maharashtra police. This final alert gave the exact coordinates of the LeT vessel *Al Hussaini*, while it was anchored off Karachi with the attackers on board.

The Pradhan committee was refused access to the original IB and R&AW intelligence inputs stored in Delhi. The alerts the central agencies passed on to the DGP's office in Maharashtra were scrubbed clean of all references, leaving no clues as to their origins. "Ordinarily, even within

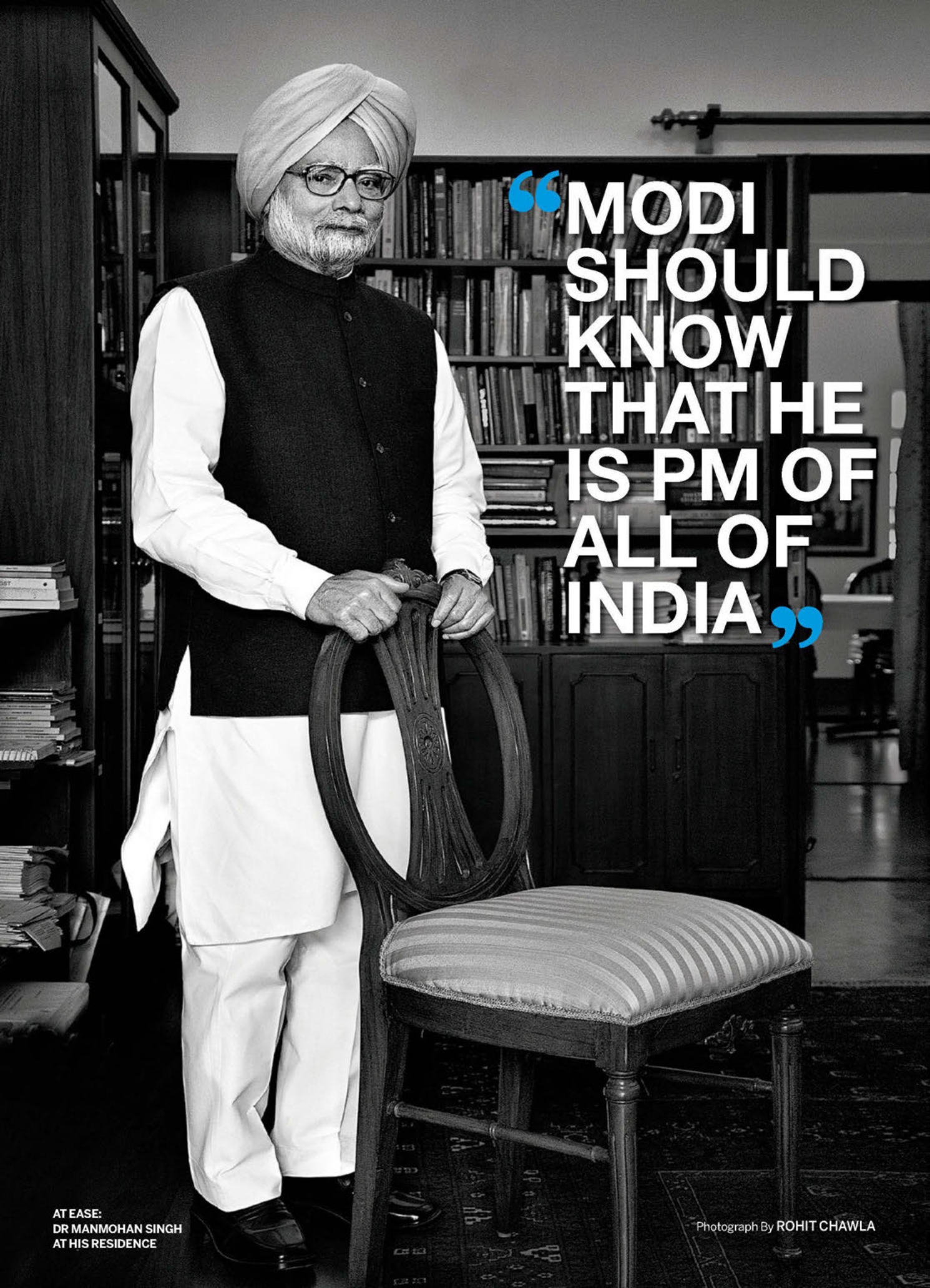
a country, the name of the informer is never revealed while the intelligence is passed on," says ex-R&AW special secretary Balachandran.

Was Headley the mole within the LeT who kept informing the US government of plans of the attacks on Mumbai? Knowing Headley's predilection for double games, it would hardly be surprising. As the ultimate undercover agent who reeled one of the most infamous terror attacks in recent history, hybrid gun-and-bomb attacks that were copycatted by the Islamic State in the November 13, 2015, attacks in Paris, Headley has been assured of a dubious place in history.

As he continues to spill the beans on former collaborators from within the US, Headley is assured of another less dubious spot. The man who blew the whistle on the complicity of Pakistan's deep state in terrorism.

Follow the writer on Twitter @SandeepUnnithan





**“MODI  
SHOULD  
KNOW  
THAT HE  
IS PM OF  
ALL OF  
INDIA”**

AT EASE:  
DR MANMOHAN SINGH  
AT HIS RESIDENCE

Photograph By ROHIT CHAWLA





*For the last year-and-a-half, Dr Manmohan Singh has been watching the political scene unfold before his eyes from his rambling Lutyens' bungalow in the heart of Delhi. The former prime minister looked on with fair dismay when the government he headed for 10 long years was unceremoniously voted out of office and the Narendra Modi-led regime took its place. And his worries have only increased seeing the manner in which it has since governed India. In between receiving friends and visitors—two in the morning and two in the evening—the former prime minister reads widely and exhaustively. When he wants to study something more deeply, he makes notes on plain paper—in his small, squiggly handwriting—and then looks for other sources that can help him understand the subject better. Congress president Sonia Gandhi drops in regularly, her son Rahul too comes sometimes. Other Congressmen come to pay their respects. He says he enjoys the intellectual stimulation that comes with meeting old friends from Cambridge and Oxford (institutions where he learned the role of politics in shaping change), or with visitors from Pakistan (former foreign minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri was here recently), or Nepal (he stepped out to meet former president Ram Baran Yadav) and other parts of the world. His study at home is lined with books and papers, hallmark of a man who has deeply invested in knowledge and who believes that even if you lose all your earthly belongings—which he did, as a Partition refugee in 1947—you always carry your learning with you.*

*In this first exclusive interview with JYOTI MALHOTRA since he demitted office (he has spoken only once before, on TV, in the wake of former president Dr Abdul Kalam's death), Dr Singh speaks freely on a wide variety of subjects. The shrinking of the economy worries him, as do the Modi government's flip-flops on Pakistan. He strongly believes that the prime minister must do much more to heal the country, and rues that he doesn't reach out to the main Opposition party, the Congress. He won't talk about the accusations against him in the coal scam, despite the fact that the CBI has given him a clean chit and said he need not come to court. Dr Singh isn't writing a book, nor his memoirs, but firmly believes that History (yes, with a capital H) will vindicate the political direction he gave India under his stewardship. Excerpts:*

**Q: What are your views on how the Narendra Modi government is dealing with the economy today?**

**A:** The economy is not in as good shape as it could be, despite the fact that the situation today is much more favourable than it was when we, the Congress-led UPA, were in government. For example, oil prices had at the time gone up to \$150 a barrel, today they are close to \$30 a barrel. This has significantly helped India's balance of payments, the current account deficit has come down, it has helped the government reduce the fiscal deficit, and in the hands

of a purposeful government, this could be an opportunity to step up investment in the economy in a big way.

**Q: But you think the government is not doing that...**

**A:** For one reason or another, the government is not able to get its act together to persuade the business community to take advantage of these fortuitous circumstances to step up the rate of investment at home. Today, the investment rate is as low as 32 per cent. When we were at the peak of our government, the investment rate went up to 35 per cent. Yes, it did come down in the last two years of our government but as I said, we had the disadvantage of a sharp hike in oil prices which is not there today.

**Q: So do you think India is missing an opportunity?**

**A:** Obviously.... Remember, we are a net importer of commodities, which means low commodity prices are a good thing for India; it helps the balance of payments, it helps the control of inflation as well as the fiscal deficit.

**Q: Why do you think the Modi government has been unable to do that?**

**A:** Obviously, people don't believe the government. When they go and call on the ministers, they say the right things, but when they come out, all of them say that nothing much has changed.... There is today a crisis of confidence in the government.

**Q: When you were PM, how did you deal with the 2008 crisis, when the global economy slowed down?**

**A:** We spoke to everyone. But today it seems to me that there is a lack of confidence within the business community. I can't make out what it is.... When they talk to the civil servants, they tell them they don't know who the boss is.... When we were in government, the business community talked a great deal about tax terrorism. I continue to hear the same talk from the business community when they come and talk to me.

**Q: What should the Modi government do?**

**A:** First of all, we have to recognise that this bonanza in oil prices isn't going to last forever. But this government has already spent two years out of five without giving people the feeling that the country is on an upward path. For example, bank credit is not moving—the rate of growth of bank credit is much lower than would be the case if the economy was on an upward trend....

**Q: What about other aspects of the Modi government? How would you assess its foreign policy?**

**A:** Certainly, relations with major powers have improved. But that was also the case with us. We had good relations with Russia, China, Japan, the US, France and Germany. The nuclear deal with the US was a path-breaking effort to break the vicious circle of nuclear apartheid. We ended the isolation of India. But I would say that the real test of foreign policy is in the handling of your neighbours. And here I would say that the Modi government's handling of Pakistan is inconsistent. It has been one step forward, two steps back. Also, with

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## INTERVIEW

### MANMOHAN SINGH

regard to Nepal, once again we have a situation where the government there is accusing the government of India of putting up a blockade, and that is very unfortunate.

**Q: Why do you say that? After all, India would like to see the people of the Terai get equal rights as other Nepalis.**

**A:** Nepal is our closest neighbour and we must make every effort to ensure that as a small neighbour we attend to their perceptions. Even when they are wrong, we have an obligation to create an environment in which the common people in Nepal feel that in India they have a great friend.

**Q: But the Madhesis feel they have not been given their full rights in a democratic Nepal...**

**A:** First of all, I feel that India should have acted much sooner than it did. The Constitution of Nepal was being approved on September 20, 2015, and the foreign secretary was sent to convey a hard message to the Nepali government only a couple or so days before that. I think this is not a very good way of tackling a very difficult problem. If India did feel there was a problem with the constitution, the government should have quietly told the Nepalis what they felt and talked to them and persuaded them. Instead, the government woke up late, just a few days before the constitution was to be adopted. In fact, a majority of Madhesis also voted for the constitution, so the government of India should have been much more conscious of what was going on in Nepali society.

**Q: The government should have reached out much more to Kathmandu?**

**A:** Yes...we have always had leverage with Nepal and we have always utilised it for the good of India-Nepal relations.

**Q: Earlier, you said the Modi government's policy on Pakistan has been inconsistent. What do you mean by this?**

**A:** Certainly, I cannot say that my government's relationship with Pakistan was free of problems. I think the control of terror is our primary concern. And Pakistan made promises it didn't keep. I think, in substance, the problem has not disappeared. The question is, how is the Modi government responding? Whatever your views on Pakistan, our effort was that we have to engage Pakistan. They are our neighbours. We can choose our friends, but we cannot choose our neighbours. But the Modi government has been inconsistent. It went out of its way to invite Nawaz Sharif for the prime minister's swearing-in ceremony, which was a good move. But the advantage that should have been taken from that move did not materialise because the Modi government made it conditional that the Pakistani government could not talk to the Hurriyat, and so the talks were cancelled.

**Q: How should the government have responded to the Hurriyat?**

**A:** The point is that the Hurriyat exists, it is there. Whether it is a representative of the people of Jammu & Kashmir is a question mark; certainly we don't recognise that it is the

only entity which can deal with the problems of Jammu & Kashmir. But there is no harm in talking to them. Even the previous government, Atalji's government, was talking to them, we were talking to them, and our stand has been that the Hurriyat, instead of talking to Pakistan, should talk to us. And therefore the sensitivity that is required to handle the relationship with Jammu & Kashmir has been missing in the Modi government.

**Q: Just to finish the question on Pakistan.... When the Mumbai attacks took place, you were prime minister. What did you say to the Pakistanis at the time?**

**A:** Our effort was to tell the world community that this is an unacceptable situation, but I was also of the view that war was no part of the solution. And therefore our effort was to put pressure on the international community so they could in turn put pressure on Pakistan to ensure that those responsible for perpetrating this horrible massacre must be brought to book. I think we did succeed on that score. I think the world community recognised that the government of Pakistan could not get away with saying that it had no hand in what had happened in Mumbai.

**Q: The Americans recognised that the government of Pakistan was involved in the Mumbai attacks?**

**A:** I don't think the Americans ever said it like that, but they did believe that the source of the terror in Mumbai was certainly in Pakistan.

**Q: But why was the world community unable to put pressure on Pakistan to deliver on those who had been accused in the Mumbai attacks?**

**A:** Unfortunately, terror has been a part of Pakistan's policy in dealing with India. At the same time, we have to recognise that we are both nuclear powers. Pakistan has now gone in for tactical nuclear weapons. Therefore, one cannot talk glibly about going to war or teaching them a lesson. We have to create an environment in which the people of Pakistan will themselves recognise that their government isn't doing the right thing for the interests of both countries.... Pakistan has often promised to take action against terror, except that its delivery of those promises remains a problem.

**Q: What did you make of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's quick trip to Lahore?**

**A:** I don't know if it was well-thought-out. There seems to be no evidence that the Pakistanis have taken action against those who perpetrated the crime in Pathankot. I read an article by the well-known Pakistani journalist Ayesha Siddiqi, who went to Bahawalpur, headquarters of the Jaish-e-Mohammed, soon after a great deal of noise was made that Pakistan had taken some action against the Jaish. But she said she didn't see any activity which was abnormal, the madrassa that is the headquarters of the Jaish seemed to be functioning as before, everything seemed quite normal. And now it comes out that Pakistan is asking—what it used

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MERRY X-MAS: THE INDIAN PM DROPS IN ON NAWAZ SHARIF

“**I DON'T THINK THE PM THOUGHT THE LAHORE TRIP THROUGH. IF YOU'RE UNSURE OF YOUR INITIATIVE'S OUTCOME, THEN IT IS A WASTED EFFORT.**”

to ask us—that you are not providing enough evidence. I think with regard to Pathankot, history is repeating itself.

**Q: But the PM's trip to Lahore, wasn't that a good thing?**

**A:** It is always good to maintain contacts with your neighbours, but there is no need to create a euphoria. If you are not sure about the outcome of your initiative, I think you are wasting the levers of power that you have regarding Pakistan. So I don't think that the PM thought it through... He said that he was in Kabul when he spoke to Nawaz Sharif, who invited him to come. But that is no way of planning or taking a view on such a sensitive relationship, especially one between India and Pakistan.

**Q: But Modi was taking a leaf out of your book, which was to have breakfast in Kabul, lunch in Lahore and dinner in Delhi.**

**A:** (*Cutting in*)... Yes, but that was only our ambition. What I did not do was succumb to pressure from various sides to go to Pakistan when I had no assurance that some effective outcomes will be there. If there is no effective outcome, then it is a wasted effort. You only compromise your own ability to deal with the problem.

**Q: But you, sir, were almost going to visit Pakistan in 2007?**

**A:** No, never.

**Q: There was a big rumour that you very much wanted to go to your ancestral village, Gah....**

**A:** There were invitations and promises and some tentative plans were also made. But I had never taken a firm decision to go there, unless and until I was assured of a positive outcome, which was that the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack be brought to book and that Pakistan stops using its

territory to launch terror attacks against India.

**Q: But it was rumoured that Gah was being spruced up for your visit....**

**A:** In matters of state, one has to be full of sentiments, but one can never be sentimental. I would like to go to my village, but there must be more to it than a mere visit.

**Q: Tell me about your back-channel conversation on Kashmir, which was amongst the most forthright in decades. Why did you start this conversation?**

**A:** Because I have always believed that relations with neighbours have to be the primary concern of India's policy, and on Pakistan, despite all its mischief, we have to learn how to engage with it. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't. But we could not simply say, especially if we believe that we are the biggest power in the region, that it's impossible to deal with Pakistan.

**Q: But what about the four-point formula on Kashmir that both sides were working on?**

**A:** Former president Pervez Musharraf has written about it, but I am not saying I'm endorsing him. Yes, there were back-channel talks, and they were moving in the right direction. The objective was to normalise India-Pakistan relations. And the solution to Kashmir, it has been recognised since the Simla Conference, must be a joint effort of the two countries. Our view with regard to Jammu & Kashmir was that borders cannot be redrawn. If borders cannot be redrawn, then you must find other ways of dealing with the problem which will satisfy the people of Jammu & Kashmir as well as India and Pakistan.

**Q: So what happens to the Line of Control?**

**A:** The Line of Control is there, we cannot redraw the line.





## INTERVIEW

### MANMOHAN SINGH

But through normalising the situation in J&K, we can create a situation where the line becomes practically irrelevant. As I had visualised it, the people of J&K on both sides should be able to trade with each other freely, move around freely, together deal with common areas like rivers and environment concerns and resolve common problems through a consultative mechanism where both sides would be represented.

**Q: This seems to be similar to Atal Behari Vajpayee's vision on Pakistan...**

**A:** Well, I carried forward that process. I think substantial progress was made, but the Mumbai massacre created a massive handicap in taking forward that process.... As for the Modi government, I cannot advise them, but they have to decide whether they want to continue to deal with Pakistan in the haphazard way they have done in the last 18 months.

**Q: What do you make of the situation in J&K today which has lapsed into governor's rule?**

**A:** In a way, the BJP as well as the PDP have a common responsibility for what is happening in J&K. Somehow, the central government has not been able to inspire much confidence in the people of J&K. In my view, the PDP is now increasingly conscious of the fact that what they have done with this marriage with the BJP doesn't have the support of the ordinary Kashmiri people. They are tempted to be part of the government, but they are also worried that if they lose the people's faith, this may be a short run affair and that in the long run it may not be beneficial to them. So I believe it is the responsibility of the central government and the BJP to create a proper atmosphere in which the PDP would have no worries in moving forward with the relationship.

**Q: Mehbooba Mufti is like a daughter to you, what advice would you give her?**

**A:** I don't know what the state of the relationship is between the BJP and PDP. But I think it is in the interest of both parties, in the interest of the people of India that Kashmir should have a well-functioning government and whatever will facilitate the smooth running of the government in J&K should be done.

**Q: To come back to national politics and the Modi government which won with such a huge majority in the 2014 elections. How did you feel when the Congress lost so badly?**

**A:** I was very sorry that the Congress lost so badly. I thought we had done enough to earn the renewed confidence of the people, but obviously there were problems and the BJP, certainly in the management of people's perceptions, scored a point.

**Q: How do you think the BJP has done in the last one-and-a-half years? There has been a huge debate on intolerance in the country...**

**A:** There is a growing view that the BJP is not able to deliver in areas in which it had made huge promises. The PM talks about 'vikas' but in the growth rate there is no significant difference from when we left power. In our last year, the growth rate was 6.9 per cent, while the latest figures today show that it is hovering around 7-7.2 per cent. So, despite the significant improvement in the balance of payments, the economy is not moving forward which was the aspiration and for which the government had made promises.

**Q: Do you think this is because the PM's attention has been distracted by the many issues regarding intolerance? The banning of beef, for example, and the unfortunate**

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**WHEN I MET HIM, I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER YOU NEED TO REACH OUT TO SONIAJI AND RAHUL. YOU CAN'T FOIST CASES LIKE NATIONAL HERALD AND THEN EXPECT....”**

**THE EX-PM & THE PM:  
MANMOHAN SINGH  
MEETS NARENDRA MODI**



***killing of a Muslim in Uttar Pradesh because he, ostensibly, had beef in his house...***

**A:** All these are problems. The public in our country expects the prime minister to take the lead in managing public opinion. But he has never spoken; whether it is on the beef problem or whether it is what happened in Muzaffarnagar or elsewhere, he has kept quiet.

**Q: *Why do you think he does that?***

**A:** I don't know, I cannot read his mind. But he is the prime minister of all the people of India and he must give every Indian the confidence that in him we have a prime minister who cares for our well-being.

**Q: *Critics of the prime minister say that one of the reasons for his silence is because he has been a long-time member of the RSS, a swayamsevak....***

**A:** So was Atalji, but Atalji grew in office. I believe Modi also has great and unique opportunities. They have a huge majority in the Lok Sabha... In the hands of a purposeful government and wise leadership, there are enormous opportunities to make progress in the management of the economy and in containing social tensions.

**Q: *In Parliament, do you think the PM is reaching out enough to the main Opposition party, the Congress?***

**A:** I have had the opportunity to talk to the PM once or twice and I have told him that he has to reach out to the Opposition much more effectively than has been the case. There has been no serious discussion with the Congress, whether it is on foreign policy or domestic policy, and even on the GST....

**Q: *There has been no serious discussion on the GST?***

**A:** Well, except that Mr (Union finance minister Arun) Jaitley came and called on me and on Soniaji to invite us for the marriage of his daughter. But that is not the way for the government to handle the relationship with the principal Opposition party.

**Q: *But the PM also invited you both to tea in the beginning of the last session?***

**A:** But there also Mr Jaitley did all the talking, the PM kept quiet. He had invited me earlier as well, and after all, if the PM invites me, I felt it is my duty to go. So I went to meet him. At that time too I had told him that if you really want to improve relations with the Congress party, it's much more essential than ever before for you to establish contact with the Congress leadership, particularly with Soniaji and Rahul Gandhi. I told him that this is not a task on which I can deliver. They are the two most important leaders of our party, and unless and until the government establishes some rapport with Soniaji and Rahul, the Congress party cannot be taken for granted. You cannot have a situation where you foist cases like the *National Herald* and then expect....

**Q: *So what did the PM say to you in response?***

“**I FEEL SAD ABOUT THOSE YEARS. THE OPPOSITION USED THE CAG REPORTS TO DISRUPT PARLIAMENT. WE NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO GIVE OUR VIEW.**”

**A:** He listened a great deal, but didn't reveal his mind. In that meeting, he asked me, “What should be done with Pakistan?” I told him, whatever your views on the relationship, we must engage Pakistan. Engagement doesn't mean that we have to agree with Pakistan on everything.... I told him that at the time of the Cuban missile crisis, the US and the Soviet Union were eyeball to eyeball but they continued to talk to each other all the time.

More recently, on the occasion of Sharad Pawar's 75th birthday, I was coming out of the function and so was the prime minister. He said to me, “With regard to Pakistan, we are following what you have suggested to me.” (Smiles)

**Q: *He is giving you credit, Dr Singh!***

**A:** Well, I don't think he would ever do that in public!

**Q: *But the truth is that despite the Pathankot attack, the talks have not broken down....***

**A:** Yes, let us see where that goes. The problem is that in Pakistan the situation is always very complex. There are several players, such as the army, which is a very powerful player.

**Q: *In Parliament, though, it is increasingly clear that the Treasury and Opposition benches are hardly talking to each other.***

**A:** That is not good for democracy, for the country. There is unwanted bitterness between the two sides. It doesn't have to be that way.

**Q: *And why do you think there is bitterness?***

**A:** Because the ruling party doesn't feel that it needs the Congress in managing the country.

**Q: *One last question on the several scandals and scams in the last couple of years of your government, such as the***

***CWG, 2G or coal. Do you feel bad that your last years were shrouded by them?***

**A:** I really feel sad about those years, that reports of the CAG were used by the Opposition to disrupt the functioning of Parliament. Actually the reports of the CAG must be discussed in the public accounts committee, but the day the report was published, the BJP brought up the matter in Parliament and it was disrupted. So we never had any opportunity to put out our view of what really happened. Parliament was never given an opportunity to objectively examine what the situation was and that has always remained a sore point with me.

**Q: *Are you bitter about that?***

**A:** I'm not bitter about anything, but it hurts me. I had not entered politics to make money for myself, my family or friends, and I felt very sad and hurt when BJP members would walk into the well of the House and say, “*Pradhan mantri chor hai*.” That really hurt me.

**Q: *So that's why you said, “History will treat me better than the present”?***

**A:** Yes, I really believe that. I really do hope so.

Follow the writer on Twitter @jomalhotra

# PLAY THE BIG HAND

In his new avatar, Congress scion Rahul Gandhi is keen to assume new identities, seek new alliances, broker peace among the old guard in a bid to win over poll-bound states



RAHUL GANDHI AT A RALLY IN DELHI

By Kaushik Deka

On February 5, in an informal interaction with journalists, Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi suddenly revealed a new identity—that of a Kashmiri. Asked if the party was keen to cobble together a government in Jammu & Kashmir in alliance with the National Conference, given the quagmire the BJP-PDP coalition is in after Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's demise, Rahul did not give a straight answer. Instead, he said, "I'm a Kashmiri and the people of Kashmir want to protect Kashmiriyat." One-quarter Kashmiri through his grandmother Indira Gandhi, this was a badge he hadn't embraced until now.

This is indeed a new Rahul, eager to assume new identities, create new political buzzwords, and seek out new friends. Sources close to him say the transformation has happened with a single objective in mind—to create an anti-Modi axis by uniting all the opposition forces. And though the Grand Alliance's success against the BJP in the Bihar assembly polls has been the catalyst, Rahul wants one change in the narrative: the pivot around which this axis revolves must be the Congress.

"Rahul believes that Modi is the antithesis to his idea of India, and that's why he is ready to go any length to fight him," says a Congress Rajya Sabha MP. "That the prime minister has made little attempt to reach out to Rahul has also resulted in a bitter and unhealthy rivalry between the two." The last straw was the *National Herald* case, which the Gandhi family sees as a below-the-belt

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

## RAHUL'S MASTERPLAN A rainbow coalition of Opposition parties to isolate Modi and the BJP

- 1 The crux of his vision of an anti-Modi axis of Opposition parties is that Congress will be its central force
- 2 Boosted by the success of Bihar, party looking for possible alliances in states—Left in West Bengal, DMK in Tamil Nadu
- 3 In variance with Modi over the 'idea of India', Rahul is going all out to discredit the Central government
- 4 He's established a cordial working relationship with most of the old guard, ending speculation of a revolt against him
- 5 He's decided against taking charge of the party in the near future, to focus more on party restructuring



**RAHUL AT UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD, TO PROTEST THE ROHITH VEMULA SUICIDE**

attack by the saffron party.

For now, Rahul has set a one-point agenda for his party—hit the Modi government hard at every opportunity. Till now, the Congress has managed to block the passage of two big-ticket reforms of the NDA government, the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill and the GST Bill. Another big gain, Rahul believes, was reinforcing the perception that the Modi government is pro-rich. “The ‘suit-boot sarkar’ jibe has forced the Modi government to recycle, rebrand and celebrate Congress policies. Look at MNREGA,” says the party’s communication in-charge, Randeep Singh Surjewala.

But a bigger revenge may come in Arunachal Pradesh, which is under President’s Rule after the Centre dismissed the Congress-led state government. The Nabam Tuki regime had been on the verge of collapse, with over 20 Congress MLAs pledging support to rebel minister Kalikho Pul. In a meeting in Delhi with Rahul earlier this month, the rebel MLAs reportedly agreed on a reconciliation formula.

If a united Congress stakes claim, the governor will have no option but to invite it to form the government, causing huge embarrassment to the BJP. “If Rahul can resolve the differences between Tuki and Pul, this episode may become a blessing in disguise as it will be a huge loss of face for Modi,” says a Congress Rajya Sabha MP.

With five states going to polls in May, the Congress strategy seems to revolve around replicating the Bihar model. All the warring factions of the West Bengal Congress have buried the hatchet and have asked the central leadership to join hands with the Left to counter the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC government. But this will not be easy because in Kerala, where the Congress is in power, the principal opposition is the Left. Within the CPI(M) too, there are two views: party general secretary Sitaram Yechury is open to “being friends with the Congress in Bengal” while his predecessor Prakash Karat’s dead against it.

In Tamil Nadu, where the Congress is a minor player, talks of rebuilding



MOHAMMED ALEEMUDDIN

**WITHIN THE PARTY, RAHUL NO LONGER HOLDS GRUDGES, AND IS READY TO FORGIVE AND MOVE ON.**

the alliance between the Congress and the DMK have again gained ground, especially after the Chennai floods. But DMK chief M. Karunanidhi’s son Stalin is a stumbling block, though his daughter, Kanimozhi, who enjoys a cordial relationship with Rahul, is open to a partnership. Rahul’s biggest achievement, however, has been putting an end to the cold war between state president E.V.K.S. Elangovan and ex-finance minister P. Chidambaram. Chidambaram’s son Karthi was involved in a bitter war of words with Elangovan, who had been hand-picked by Rahul. Unlike in the past, when Rahul strongly believed in shutting out dissidents, he reached out to Chidambaram and the two state leaders now share “more than a working relationship”, according to sources.

This is Rahul’s new avatar. He does not hold grudges and is ready to forgive and move on. The best example of this newfound management style is Captain Amarinder Singh, who was a bitter critic of Rahul until two months ago. The Gandhi scion not only named Amarinder president of the Punjab Congress, he’s also set up a communication hotline with the ex-CM.

In Assam, Rahul has dumped the idea of an alliance and decided to go it alone under the leadership of three-time CM, Tarun Gogoi. Two factors worked against an alliance with the AIUDF, the probable ally in the state. A pre-poll tie-up with AIUDF, perceived to be the party backing the interests

of ‘illegal’ Bangladeshi Muslim immigrants, could polarise the Hindu votes in favour of the BJP. Also, the party could not reach a consensus over seat sharing. Assam is politically significant as it’s the only poll-bound state where the Congress and BJP are in a direct contest. The result will have long-term political implications because it could be the first major victory in two years for the Congress, if it pulls it off.

But in Kerala, the state he’s visited the most since his 56-day-long sabbatical last year, Rahul has been unable to set a divided house in order so far. As if the public spat between Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and state president V.M. Sudheeran, a Rahul favourite, was not enough, the leaking of a letter written by home minister Ramesh Chennithala to the Congress president alleging that Chandy was acting against the interest of Hindus, further embarrassed the party. And with Chandy now embroiled in the ‘solar scam’, the party seems to have given up hope on keeping power in the state.

Apart from his state management, Rahul has also put to rest rumours of a revolt against him by the party’s old guard. Barring general secretary Janardhan Dwivedi, he now has a cordial working relationship with veterans like Ahmed Patel, Anand Sharma and Kamal Nath. Having eased these complications, Rahul is now focusing single-mindedly on Modi, and eyeing the five upcoming Assembly elections as the first step towards 2019.

Follow the writer on Twitter @KDscribe

# THE SUGGESTIO

Narendra Modi's biggest trump card could be this digital policy

By Uday Mahurkar

1

Citizens log on to [www.indiagov.in](http://www.indiagov.in) to make their suggestions

2

A 20-member team of technocrats led by CEO Dwivedi and director Mishra then collates and researches the data to cull the best out of it for use in good governance

3

The team, helped by 200 research volunteers from all across India, analyse the data

4

Mishra's team uses Word Cloud to get a first impression about major phrases and words around which the ideas are suggested

5

Volunteer teams create 'idea buckets' around the suggestions. Representative examples are then selected from every bucket.



6

A summary of the Word Cloud is made along with representative comments for each bucket with an analytical report

7

An accounts manager at a private firm in Hyderabad, M. Krishnamurthy, 57, has authored a move which could revolutionise rural banking. Last January, he suggested that the government turn rural post offices into payment banks giving normal interest on deposits. It would, at the very least, protect the savings of villagers who he had often seen losing money to dubious chit fund operators.

Krishnamurthy did this by logging on to a government portal which links citizens to various ministries. Krishnamurthy's suggestion was scrutinised by the finance ministry and the department of posts before it was accepted by the government and incorporated into the 2015 budget. Action has been swift. By March this year, all the 25,000 departmental post offices in India will have banking sections and 1,100 of them even ATMs. By March 2017, the government hopes all 1.3 lakh village post offices in the country will have a banking facility.

Each day, [www.indiagov.in](http://www.indiagov.in), the government's window for participatory governance, receives thousands of suggestions on specific subjects from

the man on the street. If they are found innovative enough or deemed useful as an aid to good governance, they are implemented. As many as 200 ideas suggested by citizens are under various stages of implementation across ministries. Even the logos of government schemes like Digital India, Swachh Bharat, the New Education Policy and other policies were selected online. Rana Bhaumik, 31, a Delhi-based IT professional, won a Rs 1 lakh prize and a certificate of appreciation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year. His design was selected for the Digital India logo. "Governance comprises policies, programmes, feedback and implementation. MyGov is a unique platform that allows people to participate in all these four aspects of governance," says IAS officer Gaurav Dwivedi, CEO of MyGov.

## GANDHIAN ORIGINS

As chief minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi had first articulated the idea behind participatory governance in 2007. At a programme in Delhi, he offered the analogy of Gandhiji's mass contact programme, khadi and the spinning wheel. "A movement of mainly lawyers," he said, "became a mass movement with the introduction



# N REVOLUTION

platform that transforms suggestions into policy inputs

of the spinning wheel. Similarly, people at the grassroots have had little say in the process of development. We need a way to get them involved.”

In July 2014, MyGov became the first major programme Narendra Modi announced as prime minister. Since then, it has been overshadowed by other larger initiatives like the Jan Dhan scheme, Niti Aayog and Swachh Bharat. But MyGov continues to work behind the scenes as a low-cost, high-yield programme. Part of the Ravi Shankar Prasad-led Union ministry of communications and information technology, it functions from a sixth floor office in Electronics Bhavan on New Delhi's Lodhi Road, where a 20-member team of young technocrats led by CEO Dwivedi and director Akhilesh Mishra sifts through this online suggestion box. They work 12-hour days to collate and distil suggestions into workable inputs for governance. The team is helped by 200 research volunteers, a mix of BJP workers, professionals and technocrats across India who analyse the data using technology tools like Word Cloud, which visually represents text data in the suggestions. Volunteers then drop these suggestions into 'idea buckets' and select representative examples from every bucket.

A Word Cloud summary is made for each bucket with an analytical report. Suggestions are analysed, pruned, collated and sent to ministries along with a summary as well as complete data for study and implementation.

One ministry which has been most active on MyGov is Arun Jaitley's finance. Even the next Union budget will take up some public suggestions, mostly on removal of red tape. One such came from Neimesh Bansal, who recommended the removal of paper submissions for the annual medical bill claims up to Rs 15,000 for government staff. No middle-class home spends less than that amount on medical treatment in any case, Bansal said, arguing that the process involved precious resources in the form of time, paperwork which could otherwise be saved.

When a ministry finally selects an idea for implementation, MyGov informs the contributor. Richa Abhyankar, 27, who works as a sub-editor on a dictionary project in Pune's Deccan College, was thrilled when she received a copy of the notification issued by Rishikesh Panda, secretary in the Union tribal affairs department, to all states seeking a list of local tribal medical practices for making a syllabus. The notification was based on her suggestion in January this year that the medical knowledge of Indian

tribal communities be developed into an authentic syllabus. “MyGov has given me the feeling that I am part of a democratic government,” says a thrilled Abhyankar. Last year, she had received an appreciation certificate for suggesting the name ‘Shram Suvidha’ for a labour ministry portal.

Agra-based government servant Hari Jaggi

YASBANT NEGI

**ONE OF PM MODI'S FIRST BIG SCHEMES, MYGOV HAS 200 IDEAS PUT FORWARD BY CITIZENS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION.**

suggested income-tax exemptions for people donating to NGOs involved in the Clean India campaign. His suggestion was accepted and incorporated into last year's Union Budget. The logo for the new education policy, which is being formulated after three decades, was created by Nawaz Shaikh, son of a daily wage earner who is now doing a PhD in science at a Pune institute.

Actionable suggestions have also come through discussions on the platform. For instance, in a discussion on bridging the gap in the health sector—generated on the website by Niti Aayog last year—Suchitra Raghavchari, a medical imaging expert from Chennai, suggested that the Aadhar card be tagged with the digital health smart card. The suggestion, she said, would reduce paperwork for moving, migrating professionals and help the poor as

Both analytical report and the full data are sent to the concerned ministry for required action

If a ministry selects an idea for implementation, MyGov is told to inform the contributor



SUCHITRA  
RAGHAVACHARI

## SUGGESTION

Medical imaging expert from Chennai suggests that Aadhar card be tagged with the digital health smart card. Reduces paperwork for moving professionals, makes it easier to claim medical insurance. Also, all health data on Aadhar is a lifeline in a crisis.



## IMPLEMENTATION

**Niti Aayog accepts suggestion, in the process of assimilating data**

HARI  
JAGGI

## SUGGESTION

Agra-based public servant suggests I-T exemptions for people donating to NGOs involved in the Clean India campaign.



## IMPLEMENTATION

**Suggestion accepted and incorporated into last year's Union Budget**

RICHA  
ABHYANKAR

## SUGGESTION

The dictionary project girl from Pune's Deccan College suggested in January that the medical knowledge of Indian tribal communities be developed into an authentic syllabus



## IMPLEMENTATION

**Union tribal affairs ministry writes to states, seeks list of local tribal medical practices for making a syllabus**

well who did not have the space to keep and safeguard medical files at home. It would also ease the task of claiming medical insurance. Just how powerful her suggestion was, was proved by the recent Chennai flood in which lakhs of people lost their financial documents and other papers but the Aadhar card data saved them. Niti Aayog has accepted her suggestion and is now working on its implementation. Says Raghavachari, who found mention on one of the PM's *Mann Ki Baat* radio talks: "Till MyGov was launched, common people lacked a role in public policy-making. Increased connectivity means even rural people can participate in the initiative now."

MyGov is also turning out to be a resource-saver for the exchequer. The PMO's mobile app, which will directly connect citizens with it, is being developed through a competition on MyGov. "By taking the MyGov route, the government will save lakhs of rupees which would otherwise have gone to a private firm towards developing the app," says MyGov director Mishra.

In fact, ministries like finance, HRD, science and technology and skill development have used MyGov "to the optimum level" for participatory governance. The portal is presently conducting one of the biggest exercises on digital innovation for the Union ministry of science and technology. The competition helps create apps, hardware and software to spruce up the last-mile delivery of governance. The ministry has earmarked Rs 1.5 crore for 20 teams to enable them to research and develop people-friendly applications and also supported them with mentorships for business, technical, marketing and financial aspects by expert bodies like IIMs and Intel.

Suggestions, competitions and polls on MyGov are also helping the government focus the formulation of its schemes and policies. For its Smart City plan, the Union urban development ministry appealed to the municipal bodies of the 98 selected cities, asking citizens to vote on specific subjects of their concerned city by organising a MyGov poll. The result was overwhelming. As many as 76 of them

organised citizens' polls on issues particular to their city. As many as 1.32 people lakh voted. In the small town of Satna, just one poll attracted 14,000 votes. Polls were organised around simple questions like 'Which area of the city should be developed first and why' with three or four options.

Even the proposed new education policy was thrown open for public comments on MyGov, in keeping with the constitutional requirement which gives a role to the panchayats and municipal bodies in the management of education at school level. The Union HRD ministry directive got responses from 1.1 lakh local bodies out of a total of 2.5 lakh, all of them giving their views on the proposed policy, thus ensuring consultation with the grassroots in the making of the new education policy. Former CAG Vinod Rai says, "MyGov is a unique experiment in participatory governance. It's a powerful pathway for including and recognising the ideas of the common man in the process of development."

## THIN ON THE GROUND

Yet, despite the enormous possibilities, MyGov's full potential has not been realised. Some 10 of the 52 ministries are yet to use it. These include high-profile ones like home, external affairs, power, coal and roads and commerce. And ministries like health, railways, water resources, tourism and sports are largely inactive. (Union power and coal minister Piyush Goyal and roads and transport minister Nitin Gadkari have their own active social media platforms that are direct citizen interfaces.)

Another bugbear is that for a mass-contact programme, MyGov has even now just 19 lakh registered users. Officials say they are working out an advertisement campaign to raise awareness about the portal—the target is to increase registered users to one crore. But even so, MyGov is one of the few silver linings among the dark clouds of a struggling economy and the questions raised on the effectiveness of Modi's governance. As his government enters the midway mark, it will need several more such schemes to deliver.

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EYES RIGHT: CHINESE  
SOLDIERS AT TIANANMEN  
SQUARE ON THE 70TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
END OF WORLD WAR II

# THE NEW RE





REUTERS



## THE BIG STORY XI'S NEW ART OF WAR

By Ananth Krishnan in Beijing

Since Xi Jinping took over as the general secretary of the Communist Party of China and became president of the republic in November 2012 and March 2013 respectively, perhaps the most marked difference from his predecessor Hu Jintao has been his dealings with the military. Under the terms of his succession as head of the party and as president, Xi was also given his third post—chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC)—putting him in the unique position of commanding the party, government and military all at once.

On February 1, Xi announced what the *PLA Daily* described as “the largest scale military reform since the 1950s”. The reforms will cement his direct control over every sphere of the vast military, which has, for decades, functioned as a state within a state, with untrammelled power and nil supervision. Besides its four main forces—the army, navy, air force and Second Artillery Corps that commands missiles and nuclear weapons—the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) was run by a vast bureaucracy spread over four general departments—the general staff, political, logistics and armament. Largely autonomous fiefdoms, favoured generals here promoted their own, lined their pockets and ruled over vast bureaucracies and commercial interests worth billions.

In January, Xi, in one swift stroke, disbanded the four departments and brought them under the direct control of the CMC. Cut to size, they have been placed on a par with 15 smaller, specialised functional ‘services’ departments, including one devoted to anti-corruption and “discipline inspection”. Xi described the move as “a dramatic breakthrough made in the

# D ARMY

INDIA SHOULD WORRY  
ABOUT XI JINPING'S  
OVERHAUL OF THE  
CHINESE MILITARY



reform of the military leadership and command system". So, for the first time in the PLA's history, the CMC will take control of its entire administration.

A second major reform was announced on February 1, consolidating what were earlier seven sprawling military area commands covering China's entire territory into five "theatre commands" (*see graphic*) that will be responsible for combat readiness and will report directly to the CMC. For the first time, the five theatres will also have a joint command of integrated land, air and navy services, in addition to two new services that have been set up: a PLA Rocket Force that will be a scaled-up Second Artillery Corps and control China's missiles; and a PLA Strategic Support Force which will, according to observers, include an expanded cyber warfare division.

## A DEPLETED FORCE

For all the impressions of the PLA—both in China and overseas—as a fearsome fighting unit, its recent history has been anything but glorious. Its last real experience of combat, against the Vietnamese in 1979, was a wake-up call, leaving the Chinese with a bloody nose. The PLA hasn't been in major combat since. But two recent episodes that tested its capabilities caused its top brass and military observers in Beijing consternation, cementing the perception that a once hardy revolutionary army—that fought the Americans in Korea, bested India and challenged the Russians—had become a bloated outfit whose generals concentrated more on the army's vast commercial interests than in training troops.

The first came in May 2008, when a devastating earthquake struck western Sichuan province, claiming over 70,000 lives. The PLA was called in to lead the rescue effort. The quake struck remote areas, but it was not entirely out of reach of the PLA's sprawling headquarters in provincial capital Chengdu. The response, however, was slow and lumbering, so inept, in fact, that it prompted an internal inquest into overhauling training at all levels.

Barely a year later came the second test, when mobs of armed Uighurs went on the rampage in Urumqi,

capital of the Muslim-majority Xinjiang province, setting buildings afire and slaughtering Chinese residents over two days. The official death toll was 197, but Uighur or Chinese, all agreed that the real number of casualties, on both sides, was far higher. Again, the army response was found wanting. One former official of the paramilitary unit, the People's Armed Police, recalled the confusion in the chain of command. Initially, young officers, with barely any training and not armed with guns, were sent to confront armed mobs of a several thousand. According to protocol, permission was required to deploy more advanced units. It never came. So confused was the response that then president Hu Jintao, who by then had taken over the PLA as the head of the CMC, had to leave the ongoing G20 meeting in Italy and rush back.

**XI'S MILITARY REFORM  
BEGAN WITH THE  
ANNOUNCEMENT OF  
THE DEMOBILISATION OF  
3,00,000 TROOPS OF THE  
2.3 MN-STRONG PEOPLE'S  
LIBERATION ARMY.**

## THE ENEMY WITHIN

Xi, his successor, is taking no chances on such incidents recurring. Both Hu and, before him, Jiang Zemin, had to cede control of the army to their predecessors in their first few years in power. In Hu's time, so influential was Jiang that even after retirement, he continued to hold an office in the PLA's Ba Yi headquarters and to receive files. The kind of power Xi now has, no Chinese leader has had in a generation. And he, clearly, hasn't been afraid of using it. Hence his reform of the military.

The PLA is unlike any other military: it doesn't work for the state, but for one political party. The relationship between the Communist Party of China and the PLA is complex. So concerned is the civilian party leadership about control over the PLA that not a month goes by in Beijing without

a high-profile announcement reiterating that the PLA's loyalty must be only to the party. Troops, even today, are made to undergo political training, sitting through hours of study of Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought.

In practice, however, the PLA has largely been left to its own devices. In a sense, its loyalty has been bought: the army was given vast commercial interests, from real estate to valuable industries, and supported by a ballooning defence budget that has recorded annual double-digit growth this past decade, set to cross \$150 billion this year. That will now end.

## BUILDING A NEW ARMY

The basic objectives of Xi's reform, PLA officials and experts say, are twofold: to centralise PLA decision-making in the hands of the CMC—and Xi—and transform what has historically been a land-dominated military into a nimble, integrated force. Xi began the process in September when he announced a demobilisation of 3,00,000 troops of the 2.3 million-strong PLA. The services departments under the CMC will handle the former task, while the new theatre commands are tasked with the latter. The idea, explains Zhao Xiaozhuo, a military expert in Beijing, is to strengthen the CMC's hand and to "reinforce the party's absolute leadership to the army".

By no means are these reforms an overnight transformation: the groundwork was, in fact, laid more than two decades ago. The reforms are finally implementing what was a strategy adopted in 1993 after the Gulf War, when the PLA, alarmed by the demonstration of US firepower, changed its abiding mission from that of "a people's war" to winning "local wars under informatised [or high-tech] conditions". Given the PLA's history as a "revolutionary army", where it has had a special historical role and cast a long shadow over other services, it has been difficult for the Communist Party to turn it into an integrated force.

Xi's reform hopes to change that. "From an organisational or institutional perspective, these reforms are unprecedented," says Taylor Fravel, an expert on the PLA and political science



# RENEWED FORCE

BY CENTRALISING PLA DECISION-MAKING, XI HOPES TO HAVE A NIMBLE, INTEGRATED WAR MACHINE

## THE OLD PLA

- Theoretically under the Party's CMC but administered itself through a vast bureaucracy
- Functioned as a 'state within a state', with a massive budget and wide commercial interests; hobbled by corruption
- Budget and command dominated by land forces, at expense of air force and navy.
- Dispersed over seven military regions, resulted in unwieldy force integration of forces and disconnect with security concerns

## THE NEW STRUCTURE

### WHO CONTROLS THE PLA?

By disbanding four autonomous departments, Xi has brought the entire PLA, both theatre commands and functional departments, under the direct control of the Central Military Commission which he heads



## IN FULL COMMAND

Five theatre commands will enhance the military's combat readiness



Graphic by SAURABH SINGH





professor at MIT. “They represent the abolition of the general staff system and military region structure the PLA had adopted in the 1950s. If successful—and it’s a big if—they should improve its combat effectiveness.”

The earlier system “hampered joint command”, says Fravel. “The main reason to create a ground forces headquarters and elevate the second artillery to a service as the PLA rocket force is to improve the joint command of troops. But the difficulty of successfully implementing these reforms should be stressed. Such wide-ranging organisational changes are not easy, so the reforms are very much a work in progress and the real work of organisational change has only just started.”

Xi, no doubt, faces a challenge. But the view in Beijing is that he is the best-placed leader in decades to achieve this. “On almost all fronts, through publicly available information, the past three years have seen rapid progress in the PLA’s modernisation,” says Shen Dingli, a leading Chinese security expert at Fudan University in Shanghai. Unlike his predecessors Jiang and Hu, Xi’s “Red roots” give him indisputable credentials. His father, Xi Zhongxun, is among the Communist Party’s revolutionary heroes. The ‘Second Red Generation’—the sons and daughters of the party’s founding revolutionaries—have “rallied around Xi”, says Beijing historian Zhang Lifan

who follows Red family histories. They place faith in him to revive the party and the PLA—both of which the Red families see as their “inheritances”, according to Zhang.

A case in point is fellow “prince-ling” Liu Yuan, son of former president Liu Shaoqi, a PLA general whom Xi has relied on in his battle to clean up the army. Liu played a key role in dismantling the vast fiefdom of the General Logistics Department—long seen as the most corrupt. Liu brought down its deputy director, Lieutenant General Gu Junshan, who controlled this fiefdom. Gu became the highest-ranked PLA officer to be arrested, tried and convicted in 2015, for illegal sale of military real estate—out of which he made millions—and “abuse of power”, believed to have involved selling ranks. Liu didn’t stop there. A year after Gu’s purge, he brought down Xu Caihou, who was for a decade China’s highest-ranked general, as vice-chairman of the CMC

under Hu. Xu would become the first member of the CMC to be expelled from the party, in 2014, for massive corruption. He died in prison in March 2015. As one Beijing observer put it, the hope is Xu’s dramatic purge would be a case of “killing a chicken to scare the monkeys”. Whether that will work still remains to be seen.

## FLEXING MUSCLE

As much as the reorganisation—and the disbanding of earlier fiefdoms—is aimed at cleaning up the military, the reforms will also dramatically alter the PLA’s projection of power beyond China’s borders. As Fravel points out, the orientation of the five new theatres is “created to align China’s strategic directions with the command of troops”. “So the northern theatre will focus on North Korea, the central theatre on the defence of Beijing, the eastern theatre on Taiwan and to a lesser extent the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands [contested with Japan], the southern theatre on the South China Sea, and the western theatre on India and border control,” he says.

For India, this could mean further widening of the asymmetry along the disputed Line of Actual Control (LoAC). In the past decade, China has already built a huge infrastructure network of highways, railway lines and airports across the Tibetan plateau. The idea is to be able to mobilise, at short notice, a vast number of assets to win a “high-tech local war”. The integration of commands, if successful, will further enable this mission.

“What the PLA is saying is we aren’t going to, any more, find Napoleonic kind of warfare. We have to be focused, reorganise with rapid response forces, and have an objective not to occupy territory, but to paralyse the adversary,” says Srikanth Kondapalli, an expert on the Chinese military who teaches at JNU in Delhi. “For this, you need concentration of firepower—air force, artillery in one area—and mobilisation. And you can’t have divisions in land, navy, air force. They’re raising 40 rapid response units, of which 30 are already done, and an airborne corps for transporting troops.”

FOR INDIA, CHINA’S WESTERN THEATRE COMMAND WOULD MEAN FURTHER ASYMMETRY ALONG THE LINE OF ACTUAL CONTROL.



HIGH FLY: XI PRESENTS FLAG TO NORTHERN THEATRE COMMANDER SONG PUXUAN IN BEIJING

AP

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HAND IN HAND 2013: INDO-CHINESE JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE IN SICHUAN

## DRAWING THE LINE

Meanwhile, the cat-and-mouse game between India and China along the LoAC continues, with both sides patrolling up to their overlapping claim lines. Despite efforts to enhance CBMs through a Border Defence Cooperation Agreement and erecting additional border personnel meeting points, the LoAC is “still simmering”, says Kondapalli, with incursions in September and November.

What the PLA reorganisation may answer is the long-running question of whether it has been an impediment to improving conditions on the border. “For years, India’s wrestled with the question of whether these incursions, which seem to occur at inopportune times, are the product of local commanders acting autonomously or whether they are directed and managed by the senior leadership in Beijing,” says Jeff Smith, director, Asian Security Programs at the American Foreign Policy Council and author of *Cold Peace: China-India Rivalry in the 21st Century*.

“For instance, after the three-week border incursion that overshadowed President Xi’s inaugural visit to India, he gave what appeared to be a relatively stern and public lecture to the PLA top brass within days of returning from his trip stressing the pre-eminence of party loyalty. On the other hand, the commander of the military region responsible for that section of the China-India border was later promoted.”

Neither country has the desire for conflict, and neither expects one. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Xi both see eye-to-eye on not holding the relationship hostage to the boundary question when economic ties are growing, particularly in terms of Chinese investment in India. But the PLA’s strategy of testing India across the LoAC hasn’t eased. Modi’s proposal to clarify the LoAC hasn’t been received favourably either, with Beijing viewing the process as an unnecessary and parallel diversion to the stalled boundary negotiations. Incursion incidents, Indian officials say, have been “managed”, but continue to hobble ties. And as Xi builds a new army, the worry for India is that the sensitive balance of power will continue to tilt in China’s favour.

Follow the writer on Twitter @ananthkrishnan



PTI

COMPARED TO CHINA, INDIA'S MILITARY REFORMS ARE LAGGING FAR, FAR BEHIND

Explaining the impact of China’s military reorganisation along India’s 4,000-km disputed land boundary, particularly the newly constituted ‘West Zone’ which merges the erstwhile Lanzhou and Chengdu military regions, an Indian army general explains, “Earlier, there were two military commanders who looked at the border with India. After the reorganisation, there will be only one.” Three Indian generals—the Northern, Central and Eastern army commanders—are responsible for protecting the undemarcated boundary with China.

“The newly-created West Zone will facilitate the rapid induction and deployment of high-altitude acclimatised and trained troops into Tibet and across Ladakh,” says Jayadeva Ranade, former additional secretary in R&AW and president, Centre for China Analysis and Strategy, New Delhi. The Narendra Modi government has promised to reform India’s vast but ageing military machine. In addresses to the combined commanders’ conferences in 2014 and, more recently in 2015, the prime minister spoke of retooling the military to fight the wars of the future. But it has not materialised yet. Three futuristic forces—a cyber warfare command, a space command and a special operations command—are pending cabinet approval.

Critical measures like the creation of a Chief of Defence Staff, first recommended by a Group of Ministers in 2001 and later, a Permanent Chairman Chiefs of Staffs Committee (CoSC) by the Naresh Chandra Committee in 2012, are yet to be implemented. A permanent CoSC would spur the services to fight future wars jointly. In the absence of a joint planning and coordination structure, services are left to draw their own war plans and fight for scarce budgetary resources. The responses are usually single-service specific, like the army’s newly raised Mountain Strike Corps. The 17 Corps, a strike formation with nearly 90,000 soldiers meant to capture Chinese territory in the event of a border skirmish, was approved in 2013 but is yet to get the budgetary approval of over Rs 64,000 crore. The infrastructure which would allow the army to rush troops and equipment to the border, or allow a strike corps to launch an assault across the border, continues to lag. Barely 600 km of the 3,000 km of critically required border roads identified by a study group over a decade ago, has been completed.

—by Sandeep Unnithan



Auto Report

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# BOLD AND TH

The premium hatchbacks still look pretty but India's hot and heavy affair with the

By Yogendra Pratap

**T**he trends in 2015 were quite clear—the craze for SUVs was here to stay and the premium hatchback still had a lot going for it. The i20 from Hyundai was a bestseller for long as there was little competition for it. But soon after the Baleno launch, Maruti-Suzuki has been racking up the numbers, and even Honda Cars has benefitted as

the Honda Jazz has leap-frogged their compact sedan, the Amaze, to occupy the second spot in the company sales charts. Looking ahead, the craze for SUVs will continue unabated, it seems, fuelled first by the new compact SUV, the Vitara Brezza from Maruti-Suzuki, and bolstered by new ones all along the range, right from the Mercedes GLS at the very top to the true-blue Jeep Wrangler in the middle to the bottom rung, where Hyundai is readying its

## BMW X1 The Mini Roadie

The BMW X1 was the first vehicle in the premium compact SUV segment but lost out after a while because of its unconventional looks and driver-focused approach to interiors, vehicle dynamics and suspension set-up. However, with the second generation of the vehicle, not only has BMW

made it more mainstream in terms of looks, it's also shifted the focus of the vehicle, basing it on the newly developed front wheel drive platform, the UKL2, on which the Mini range of cars is also based. The looks are more like a conventional SUV now, in line with the new X5 and the X3. In fact, one could



**LxWxH (mm)** 4439x1821x1612  
**Engine capacity** 1995 cc  
**Cylinders/Valves per cylinder** 4/4  
**Ground clearance** 165 mm  
**Max power** 190 bhp@4000 rpm  
**Max torque** 400 Nm@1750-2500 rpm  
**CO2 emission** 127.89 gm/km  
**Fuel economy** 20.68 kmpl  
**Price** Rs 29.9 lakh onwards  
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# € BEAUTIFUL

SUV is what has the world purring. Expect a rash of launches for every budget.

compact SUV based on the HND14 concept and Tata Motors will launch both its compact SUV, Nexon, as well as its flagship, the Hexa.

But the action isn't just concentrated among the SUVs. The compact sedan market is also expected to heat up with the introduction of the Kite 5 sub-4 metre sedan from Tata Motors and also the VW Ameo. And that's just for starters. The action in the premium segment will be concentrated more on

petrol engine technologies and hybrids. Volkswagen has announced a plug-in hybrid for India already and BMW will be announcing its petrol engine strategy during the year. Hybrids are expected to be an integral part of it.

But the biggest lesson going into 2016 is that Indians want the most stylish cars, loaded with features and convenience systems, but at an attractive price. Manufacturers will be attempting to match those expectations.

well mistake the X1 for one of the larger SUVs, so similar is it in profile. Unlike most other cars on this list, the X1's price has already been announced. For now, the car will be available with only a diesel 1995 cc engine and with two front-wheel and two all-wheel drive variants, BMW will announce its

petrol engine range in the second half of the year. The top-end variant comes loaded with an iDrive touch controller, navigation and a hard disk with a 22.3 cm high-resolution display, a head-up display and a 205 watt 7-speaker music system. Though bookings have started, expect deliveries only by March-end.



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**Toyota FORTUNER**

## The Big Bull

The macho Fortuner's exteriors have got a contemporary brush-up. So the roundish front end has been replaced by a sharp set of headlamps and sitting in between is a big chrome grille. The giant SUV now has cleaner lines and edgier looks. It is also longer (4795 mm) and wider (1855 mm). However, at 1835 mm in height, it sits marginally lower. Being a true-blue SUV, the ground clearance of about 200 mm should come in handy. The interiors have also got a make-over. So there's a touchscreen infotainment system display and digital air-con system. Powering the Fortuner will be two 2.8 L and 2.4 L diesel engines with options of either a 6-speed automatic or a 6-speed manual. While the former will power the AWD variant, we expect the smaller engine will run the 2WD version.



**Engine** 2755 cc, 4 cyl, 16-valve, DOHC  
**Max power** 177 bhp@3400 rpm  
**Max torque** 420 Nm@1400 rpm

**Gearbox** 6-speed auto/ 6-speed manual  
**Estimated price** Rs 25 lakh

**Volkswagen PASSAT GTE**

## Hybrid Ride

While all the focus has been on the upcoming Polo GTi and the pre-premium SUV, the Tiguan, VW will also be launching the new Passat sedan in India. And it will not just be diesel, there'll also be a GTE version. Now that's talking. The new premium Passat comes with a renewed focus on comfort and luxury and some really pathbreaking technologies already incorporated in the normal version. The GTE, though, will be a plug-in hybrid, making the Passat the first such car in the country. It will have a pure electric range of 50 km and an overall range of 1,000 km. It is designed to run as an electric car on the home-office run. The engine seamlessly adds to the drive when extra power is required, or the batteries are getting depleted or at high speeds of over 120 kmph. The car also features a GTE button which gives the car a max exhilaration performance.



**Engines** 1.4-litre petrol TSI & 3-phase 85 kW motor  
**Power** Combined 218 bhp  
**Torque** 250 Nm plus 330 Nm

from the motor  
**Fuel efficiency** Over 30 kmpl in hybrid mode (claimed)  
**Estimated price** Rs 45 lakh





**Engines** 1.6-litre diesel  
and 1.8-litre petrol  
**LxWxH (mm)** 4570x1800x1440

**Gearbox** 6-speed manual and  
6-speed automatic



## Hyundai **ELANTRA** 🚗 It's All Fluidic

The next-generation Elantra made its debut at the Los Angeles Motor Show last year. Not only does the car look different, it is also 20 mm longer and 25 mm wider than before. Wheelbase at 2,700 mm remains constant though. The already sweeping design lines guided by Hyundai's Fluidic design philosophy have sharpened and as a result the sedan has evolved to become even more striking. Inside, the refurbishment is as comprehensive. The dashboard and the instrument panel are all new, and the car comes loaded with features. The centre console houses a touch-screen LCD panel displaying maps for satellite navigation. It also serves as a display for the infotainment system. Hyundai claims the Elantra is now also

good for rear seat passengers as the space at the back has increased. Rear passengers also get their own aircon vents apart from a central arm rest. The new car also takes a leap forward with a number of class-leading convenience and safety features. An Integrated Memory Seat (IMS) enhances driver comfort, while Smart Trunk allows easy loading as it opens automatically when the Smart key-holder approaches. In addition, a new suite of safety technologies like Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB), High Beam Assist (HBA), Blind Spot Detection (BSD) and Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA) are also in the package internationally and should make it to India if the Elantra wants to do well.



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Jeep **WRANGLER**

## The Original

The Jeep Wrangler is the daddy of all off-roaders, one of those all-time icons with the likes of the Ford Mustang, Volkswagen Beetle and the Mini, all of which have already made their way to India. Jeep, though, is eponymous with an SUV and in India is the generic term for a go-anywhere vehicle. The Wrangler will make its debut along with the Grand Cherokee, and to start with will be available in a 4-door Unlimited version with a diesel engine. Later on, FCA, the mother company of the Jeep brand, will also launch the Wrangler with the famous 3.6-litre Pentastar V6 petrol engine. Of course, along with its legendary 4x4 off-road capabilities, it's also being marketed as a life-style vehicle, the rough 'n tough tag possibly the pull for future owners.



**Engine** 2.8-litre, 4-cylinder, 16-valve, DOHC, Diesel

**Max power** 200 bhp@3600 rpm

**Max torque** 460Nm@ 1600-2600 rpm

**Estimated price** Rs 25 lakh

Maruti-Suzuki **VITARA BREZZA**

## Small World



**Engine** DDiS 200 1248 cc  
**Max power** 90 bhp@4000 rpm  
**Max torque** 200 Nm@1750 rpm

**Estimated price at launch** Rs 7.5 lakh onwards

Maruti had first displayed a small SUV concept back at the 2014 Auto Expo but the vehicle we saw at the 2016 show was totally different. Made on the new global compact platform that also underpins other models like the Baleno, the Vitara Brezza is a compact SUV under 4 metres in length with a large spacious cabin and the bold muscular looks of an SUV. The interiors are premium, much like in the Baleno and all variants will be equipped with a single airbag and ABS, with the top-end variants having two airbags. It will be launched in this fiscal itself and will be positioned against the Ford EcoSport (and slightly above the Mahindra KUV 100). It will fit into the Nexa range of cars and top-end variants will come with touchscreen, reverse camera and mood lighting. The Brezza will also be available in three exterior trims—glamorous, sporty and urban—and will be powered by the same 1.3-litre diesel engine that does duty on most Maruti cars. A petrol engine will come later in the year.



**BMW 310R**

## Twin Peaks

The result of an association between TVS and BMW, the G310R is already the talk of the town. Seen here is the BMW version, but TVS will have a similar spec bike designed to look like a TVS, with a less premium price tag. So expect minor differences visually. The bike will also be made in India. Powered by a 313 cc, single-cylinder, four-valve liquid-cooled engine, with double overhead camshafts and fuel injection, the engine produces 34 bhp at 9500 rpm and 28 Nm of torque at 7500 rpm. ABS will be bundled as standard. Other mechanical specs include USD forks up front and a monoshock set-up at the rear while braking performance comes from 300 mm front and 240 mm rear disc brakes.



**Engine** 313 cc, 4-stroke single  
**Max power** 34 bhp@9500 rpm

**Max torque** 28 Nm@7500 rpm  
**Gearbox** 6-speed



**Royal Enfield HIMALAYAN**

## Mountain Glory

It's been quite some time since we first spotted the Royal Enfield Himalayan being tested across the country. Now finally we got to see the finished product, looking simple and purposeful. There is minimal bodywork and the 15-litre fuel tank is well guarded by metal protectors which double up as luggage carriers. The Himalayan comes with a monoshock at the back and 41 mm forks up front which offer 200 mm of travel. Perfect for those outdoor escapades. The engine is new too, an SOHC valve train with two valves and displacing 411 cc. It offers 24.5 bhp and 32 Nm of torque.



**Engine** 411 cc,  
4-stroke single  
**Max power** 24.5  
bhp@6500 rpm  
**Max torque** 32  
Nm@4000 rpm  
**Gearbox** 5-speed

**Triumph THRUXTON**

## Royal Rumble

The third bike in the Bonneville range is the Thruxton and the Thruxton R. These bikes feature a cafe racer design and share the same engine as the T120. The Thruxton R is powered by a 1200 cc engine that churns out 112 Nm at 4950 rpm and comes in two colours: Diablo Red and Silver Ice. The price of the Thruxton R has not yet been announced, but it is slated to be on sale from July 2016. Triumph is also offering a massive amount of aftermarket accessories which include Vance & Hines exhausts, body kits and even clothing to go along with this new range. In all, around 470-plus options will be available in the market.



**Engine** 1200 cc  
**Max power** 24.5 bhp  
@6500 rpm  
**Max torque** 112 Nm@  
4950 rpm  
**Gearbox** 6-speed



— by Yogendra Pratap and Rahul Ghosh

# AN UNEQUAL MUSIC

The prolific filmmaker deploys his craft to shine a light on the homophobic darkness that engulfed a gay professor's life and drove him to death

By Suhani Singh

“Over the years, I have wondered what is it that I leave behind for our children. Will they inherit a better world,” asks filmmaker Hansal Mehta, seated in the cosy Mumbai office of his production house, Karma Pictures. He is in an introspective yet cheerful mood. The Mac desktop plays an Indian classical track softly in the background. The National Film Award for best director for *Shahid* (2013) hangs on the wall. It also holds a framed poster of Mehta's second film *Dil Pe Mat Le Yaar* (2000), with Manoj Bajpayee's face laughing at him. That was Mehta's last collaboration with the actor, whom he has known for 22 years. His eleventh feature, *Aligarh*, sees a Bajpayee unlike what we have ever seen before—bashful, soft-spoken, forlorn and old. Bajpayee, 46, plays the role of S.R. Siras, the 64-year-old professor at Aligarh Muslim University who was suspended from his job in 2010 after two intruders barged into his house late at night and recorded him sleeping with another man. The Delhi High Court had then delivered a landmark judgement striking down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code as unconstitutional, thereby decriminalising homosexuality. Siras's case would result in a debate on the fundamental rights of homosexuals. Two months after the incident, Siras was found dead in his apartment. He had allegedly committed suicide.

With *Aligarh*, Mehta once again zooms in on the trials and tribulations of the ostracised and the powerless in the society. “We marginalise

FACTS OVER FEAR: HANSAL MEHTA (LEFT) AND MANOJ BAJPAYEE



MANDAR DEODHAR



people by putting them in boxes—gay, lesbian, Muslim, Dalit,” says 47-year-old Mehta. “We need to look at them through the prism of humanity. I want my films to be part of the movement to make the world more equitable.” Mehta has succeeded, for *Aligarh* is that much-needed film that deviates from mainstream Hindi cinema by not stereotyping gays as sexual predators or annoying, overtly effeminate buffoons. “My films don’t attempt to titillate and sensationalise things,” he says. “They intend to make you introspect.”

*Aligarh*’s strength and beauty lie in that it treats its protagonist with dignity. It is largely made possible by Bajpayee’s career-defining performance. The National Award-winning actor, best known for his portrayal of domineering and colourful characters like Bhiku Mhatre (*Satya*) and Sardar Khan (*Gangs of Wasseyapur-I*) internalises Siras’s pathos to such a degree that empathising for him becomes natural. Playing a man almost two decades his senior, Bajpayee’s Siras walks with a measured rhythm and a slight slump. His delivery and demeanour suggest Siras’s love for poetry. It’s a character few would have dared to take on in Bollywood, says Bajpayee, singling out Nawazuddin Siddiqui as an exception. “Here, actors have a lot to lose,” he says. “There is a lot riding on them. I am a perpetual struggler. The advantage with actors like me is that there are filmmakers out there who want to make their films with us. The commerce is not depending upon us, but the content definitely is.”

Siras’s story landed in Mehta’s junk folder in 2014. It was serendipity that researcher Ishani Banerjee’s e-mail caught his eye. Apurva Asrani, Mehta’s frequent collaborator, had already heard of the story and decided to write the screenplay. *Aligarh* deviates from being a straightforward biopic, approaching the story from the eyes of a journalist (Rajkumar Rao) who follows Siras and the case. (Rao’s character is based on the former *Indian Express* reporter Deepu Sebastian.) Through the conversations between

Siras and Sebastian, viewers witness the former’s poetic sensibility and also the fragile mental state of a man who suddenly sees his world fall apart. *Aligarh* then goes on to show the many struggles of gay men such as dealing with hostile and judgemental neighbours and difficulties in finding accommodation. “It is the juxtaposition of Apurva’s world and our imagined world of Professor Siras,” says Mehta. In a beautiful scene, we discover Siras’s love for whiskey accompanied by Lata



“THE ADVANTAGE WITH ACTORS LIKE ME IS THAT THERE ARE FILMMAKERS WHO WANT TO MAKE THEIR FILMS WITH US. THE COMMERCE IS NOT DEPENDING ON US, BUT THE CONTENT DEFINITELY IS.”

Manoj Bajpayee, Actor

Mangeshkar’s voice. In another, when Siras’s dispute with the university is taken to court, he says, “*Mujhe* activism *mein* interest *nahin* hai.”

In Siras, viewers will find a character who is a reluctant fighter, an individual who doesn’t want to wear his sexuality on his sleeve. Siras hates the spotlight. Mehta, in collaboration with

National Award-winning cinematographer Satya Nagpaul, takes a gentler gaze, shrouding Siras in demure and soft lights. “It is about the freedom of choice,” says Mehta. “He chooses not to speak about it. The problem with activism is that you want everybody to come out and do what your agenda says. The intention of activism is great but everybody need not be that open flag-bearer.”

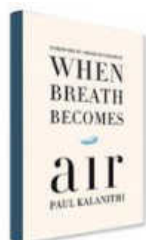
*Aligarh* is further proof of how Mehta has evolved as a filmmaker. In a career spanning two decades, Mehta has flirted with the mainstream and seen more lows than highs. Mehta acknowledges his failures—of which there have been a few, like sex comedy *Yeh Kya Ho Raha Hai* (2002) and thriller *Woodstock Villa* (2008)—to compulsions and misgivings of a young filmmaker. “I was making terrible films without even asking myself why,” he says. “There was greed. I was lost.” After *Woodstock Villa*, Mehta took a sabbatical and headed to Lonavala, where he spent three years introspecting and “did a lot of cooking”, says his son Jai, who has assisted him. “Failing has kept me grounded,” concludes Mehta. With *Shahid*, he returned with a bang. Next up is *Simran*, “a character study based on real events”, with Kangana Ranaut.

Even before its release, *Aligarh* has already made headlines. The Central Board of Film Certification gave the trailer an A certificate, restricting its telecast on channels as well as screening in theatres. Mehta and his producers Eros are miffed. “Censorship is now trying to infringe upon basic fundamental rights,” he says. With the Supreme Court reconsidering the constitutionality of Section 377 and appointing a five-judge constitution bench to hear the curative petitions, the film couldn’t have come at a better time for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community of the world’s largest democracy. Siras’s story had a tragic end, but Mehta is an optimist. “I believe future generations will inhabit a world that is not so unequal.”

Follow the writer on Twitter @suhani84

# A YEAR OF MAGICAL LIVING

A neurosurgeon, diagnosed with lung cancer, leaves behind a heartbreaking memoir



**When Breath Becomes Air**  
by Paul Kalanithi  
Penguin Random House  
Pages 228  
Price Rs 419

By Kaveree Bamzai

Sheared heads. Battered brains. Two undigested morphine pills found in the stomach of a cadaver, suggesting the patient had died in pain, perhaps alone and fumbling with the cap of a pill bottle. The surgeon's scalpel cutting open a head, the frenzy of the drill, the smell of burning bone, its dust whirling, the crack as a section of the skull is pried off.

For Paul Kalanithi, a gifted neurosurgeon, this was routine, transforming him from death's enemy to its ambassador, helping patients and their families to arrive at an understanding of mortality,

not so much saving lives as preparing them to die better. Little did he know that soon he would be confronted by the choice—to deny death or to face it, grasp it, uncloak it, see it eye-to-eye, unblinking. Not to be terrified by it but to see its beauty and its possibility. In the time he lives with the cancer growing within him, he nurtures his love for his wife, brings a beautiful child into the world, cements his relationship with family and friends, and leaves behind a

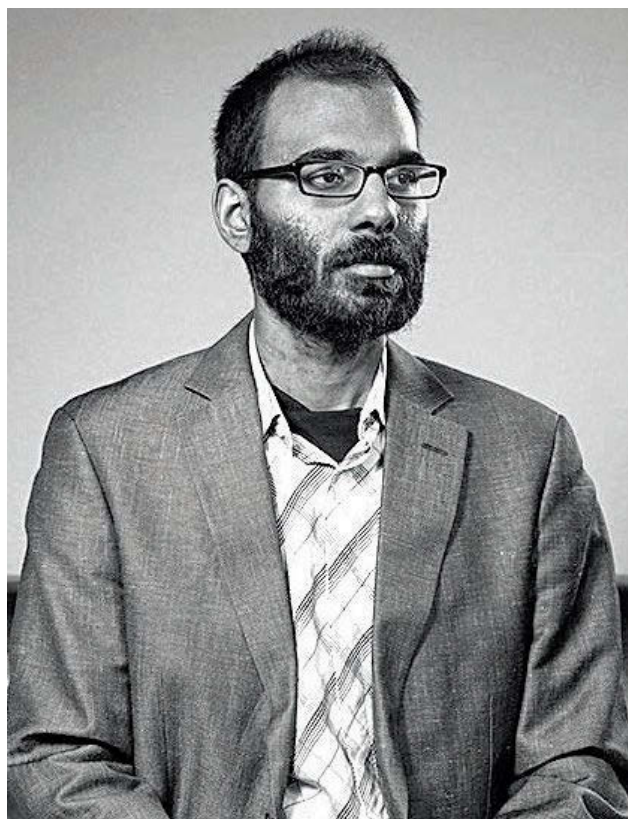
legacy of beautiful forevers. As he writes, “The question is not simply whether to live or die but what kind of life is worth living.”

In a memoir written while he was dying, Paul, a second-generation Indian, unveils what it is to be a patient in its most classical definition—one who endures hardship without complaint. Which is probably the best way to define the human condition. We are but receptacles for all the sorrows and traumas that life inflicts on us, allowed to come up for air only occasionally and given meagre joys so we can fully appreciate how wonderful life can be. Paul, a literature student who chooses medicine, training for it for 10 long gruelling years, is almost within reach of the Promised Land, a professor of neurosurgery with a plethora of offers to choose from, when he is struck down by cancer, and dies within a year, at 37.

But instead of railing against the injustice of it all, he chooses to live wholly and in full measure. And in the process leaves behind a memoir that is a testament to the power and terror of modern medicine. Here is Paul, whose most complex decision till now has been to choose between a French dip and Reuben, called upon to play God—choose the mother or the child, choose death or a life with debilitating limitations. The hours are brutal—“As residents, we were working as much as one hundred hours a week...my eyes watered, my head throbbed, I drowned energy drinks at two am,” he writes. The days are long, but the years are short. The cases are horrific—a child shot in the head for wearing the wrong colour shoes, or a hypothalamus damaged during an operation to remove a brain tumour, turning a cheerful eight-year-old into a monstrous 12-year-old who is soon institutionalised, because of a mere one millimetre of damage.

More than anything else, *When Breath Becomes Air* is about love, empathy and about taking up another's cross, fully aware that one might be crushed by the weight. It's that love that Paul's widow Lucy carries, as she shepherds the book's release, shares her husband with the world, mourning his absence in the flesh but also celebrating his presence in his words. As Lucy says, from London, where she is on a book tour: “The public response to the book has been fortifying, but there has also been the private expression of bereavement,” a curious field she is navigating seeking her husband's guidance in spirit at every point. “Just as I started the book tour in California, I also had to finalise the text for Paul's gravestone,” she says.

Like Randy Pausch's last letter, Paul's gift is the greatest for those closest to him, allowing them to stay connected to him, but also enabling us, the larger reading public, to glimpse what greatness can lie in ourselves, if we learn to love.







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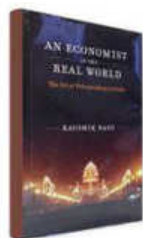


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# AN ECONOMIST ADrift

Kaushik Basu makes a case against India's officialdom, which he feels exists to stall change



**An Economist in the Real World: The Art of Policymaking in India**  
by Kaushik Basu  
MIT Press  
Pages 240  
Price Rs 449

By Anshuman Tiwari

With the economy going through a rough patch, Prime Minister Narendra Modi probably remembers his meeting with former chief economic advisor Kaushik Basu. He asked Basu to give him some ideas for the economy. Basu went a step further and wrote an entire book. Basu's core job as CEA was to prepare the Economic Survey of India. He reinvented the exercise by dressing up pragmatic, visionary and polemic ideas with varied data and economic analogies. Basu's new book is also an economic survey of India, though of a different kind. He steered the economy at an unusual time when the Anna Hazare-led anti-corruption movement was in full swing. The political milieu at the time did not allow him to use his wisdom to the fullest as the country was in the midst of an unprecedented transition.

Basu's prowess on economic matters is outstanding and the construct of his surveys has always proved that he is the master of a compelling narrative as well. His skill in simplifying the complex makes this book a satisfying read for even an economic toddler. But what is more remarkable are his sharp observations about bureaucracy, which in the past have landed Basu in many a controversy, quite at variance with his soft-spoken persona. Basu writes how Amartya Sen advised him to stay extra cautious while dealing with the media. He dubbed it the 'Sen rule' and devised an 'extended Sen rule' as well. But despite his best efforts, Basu couldn't hold himself back when it came to dealing with India's moribund and corrupt bureaucracy. A major controversy erupted over his comments on the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1998, when he suggested declaring the act of giving a bribe legal and only holding the act of taking a bribe illegal. Unfortunately, that coincided with the time when Delhi's streets were host to India's first-ever mass movement against corruption in public office.

Basu had created a discussion paper to suggest changes in the Prevention of Corruption Act and posted it on his ministry's official

website as well. But the idea proved too radical for comfort. To his surprise, even then PM Manmohan Singh didn't concur, though he gave him a free hand, saying "it is your job to bring ideas to the table, and you should feel free to articulate your ideas in public and discuss them".

Basu's book doesn't mince words when it comes to the bureaucracy. At a meeting on petrol and diesel regulation, he observes how the privileged bureaucracy was completely oblivious to the comfort it lives in. Officials vehemently spoke against deregulation saying corporate bosses would unnecessarily get access to cheaper fuel for their lavish lifestyles. However, they overlooked the fact that they themselves access free fuel effectively. Basu suggests that "we needed to take away this very expensive perquisite which is a part of life in government bureaucracy".

His 10 chapters are a treatise on various aspects of the Indian economy, ranging from economic maladies to development without borders. If the government wishes to implement his ideas, it must pay heed to the following two tips: understanding the cultural and behavioural milieu of society is a must before formulating laws, and the government should not meddle with market forces but let it take its own course. The three big takeaways from the book:

► While India and other nations strive for higher, sustainable growth, they must take into cognisance the fairly small world that we all share. Ultimately, the nationalisms of the day must make way for a global agenda that all people, irrespective of their narrow identities, can shape and cherish;

► India's higher education sector is raring to go and can take off with no long-run fiscal burden on the state;

► India has one of the most talented yet obstructive bureaucracies in the world. If the nation is to grow at rates it is capable of, it is important to have administrative reforms to change this individually-talented bureaucracy into a collective-supportive force.

Basu's book effectively lights a torch on the 'real world' of mandarins and at the same time introduces the novice to the state of the Indian economy in a truly global context. Bureaucrats and economic freshers alike can delve into the book, for it holds enough insights.

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Illustration by SAURABH SINGH





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# IN SEARCH OF A MOTHER TONGUE

Jhumpa Lahiri wanders the world, at her desk, in a two-decade-long study of Italian

By Gayatri Jayaraman



**In Other Words**  
by Jhumpa Lahiri  
Penguin India  
Pages 210  
Price Rs 399

It is impossible to review an essay in which an author sets out to review herself. Jhumpa Lahiri in *In Other Words* cracks open her craft and her personal insecurities of belonging in a bid to get away from all the impositions of the autobiographical, from Bengali in America to author of a certain kind of immigrant novel. She triangulates her identity by moving home with husband Alberto Vourvoulias-Bush and two kids to a third point on the map, Rome. *In Other Words* is a writer's essay, painfully self-reflective and a precursor to any real

writing she may attempt in Italian, a defensive missive she sends ahead. She explains the movement from studying Italian for 20 years to writing in it through the metaphor of swimming in a lake, a skirting round the edges that has progressed to the plunge into the deep middle.

Yet, has it? The international edition, sadly not available to Indian readers, contains the original Italian alongside the English translation by Ann Goldstein, and would have helped provide evidence of Lahiri's unique cadence, in the way that a Pablo Neruda book of poetry works alongside his translated versions. That said, the English version alone provides enough glimpse of the original Lahiri, Pulitzer-prize winning author of *The Interpreter of Maladies*, *The Namesake*, *Unaccustomed Earth* and *The Lowland*, except one caught in her private ruminations the relocation not just of the physical self but also of mental resources. Unlike *Big Magic*, Liz Gilbert's 2015 book for writers, it's not an instructive book, but far more internal in its machinations. And while it contains two mystical short stories within it, they serve as first drafts, inroads of a writer yet to master a new landscape. It would be tempting here to tell you that the Italian reviews praise her language, but should that impact us, the readers of her works, unless it improves who she becomes as an author? Skillful as she may be in the original, Lahiri, one level removed from us in translation, in all the explanations she gives for herself, is still skirting the edges of the lake, and is telling you, not showing you, the possibility of the magic of a story in Italian. It is not fructified into a narrative—whether fiction or non-fiction



GETTY IMAGES

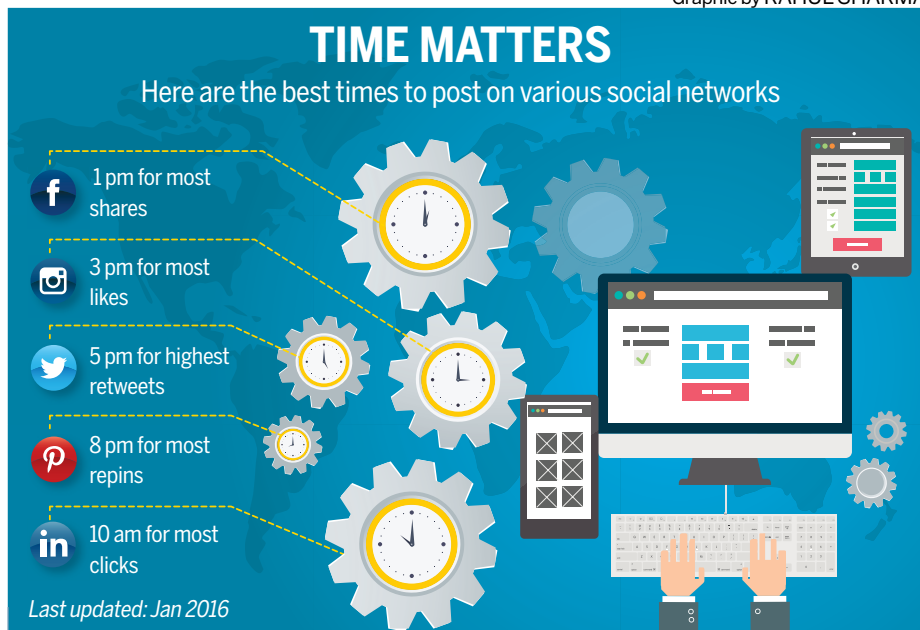
is irrelevant—that acquires the stride of ownership. When that happens, and given that Lahiri exists in glimpses here, in her clarity and brevity, the book will cease to be just inward looking. The comparison to Vladimir Nabokov on the opening fold is then a bit premature. If anything, it is more of Haruki Murakami's *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*, but with purely internal running.

So, is *In Other Words* little more than an insight into an award-winning author's whimsical reinvention? "I can write in Italian, but I can't become an Italian writer," she writes towards the end of her book. The status of the exile: in revisiting this signature theme, Lahiri, who seeks to leave herself behind, unthinkingly brings the root of her original self with her. The book is not just a work in transition but an author in transition, and it is as an insight into the stories she will tell, if she tells them at all, that this book will acquire value.

It is significant that Lahiri's musings, the nod to her husband's Latin American-Greek-American ancestry, are located in a Europe struggling with the idea of the European Union, currency and language, and in the distancing from an America that is alienating many of its once-immigrant citizens. Lahiri's writing does not actively reflect on these but they linger beneath the surface of a language she needs to look up to evaluate her environment. In this, *In Other Words* becomes a crucial reading. Lahiri discovers that the geographically bereft find ownership only in language. "Those who don't belong to any specific place, can't in fact return anywhere. The concepts of exile and return imply a point of origin, a homeland. Without a homeland and without a true mother-tongue, I wander the world, even at my desk. In the end I realise that it wasn't a true exile; far from it. I am exiled even from the definition of exile," she writes. If that is so, hopefully, she will realise that language is incidental to the story, and she'll get back to just telling the story again.



Graphic by RAHUL SHARMA


**→ viral video**


SNL skit of US politician Bernie Sanders and comedian Larry David mimicking him wows 2 mn



A mother getting her triplets and toddler ready for the day impresses 40 million



A video explaining how rainbow-coloured bagels are made has 1 million people salivating

**→ web win**
**Reaching Out**


Actor Varun Dhawan won hearts on Twitter when he wrote to a fan girl who didn't want a picture taken with him. In a series of tweets, Dhawan comforted the girl who felt she wasn't stylish enough, saying she should be her own person.

**→ web lol**
**Soap Opera Inspiration**


Over 30,000 tweet on a video from Ekta Kapoor serial *Kasamh Se*. Intense clip has a man-woman eye contact scene with crazy visual and sound effects. Netizens compare it to their own lives.

**→ web trend**

**Picture Puzzle**

After the mystery of the dress, the web is now intrigued by a photo of three women. Kalyan Mahomes took a selfie with her twin and mother and asked netizens to guess who was who. Over a lakh people have pored over the pix to figure it out.

**→ twitter tattle**
**Weighty Issues**

When actor Randeep Hooda tweeted about his dramatic and sudden weight loss, Twitter naturally reacted with jokes comparing his before and after to situations like 'client expectations' and 'client budget' etc.


**→ web wow**

**Wearable Health**

Indian teenager Utkarsh Tandon creates a wearable tech device—a ring—which could potentially save the lives of Parkinson's sufferers.

Follow the writer on Twitter @lkummi

**→ what's new**
**App Alert**


Guides by *Lonely Planet* give you virtual tours of the world



Graffiti Pro lets you draw characters on your phone instead of typing them

## BIG DATA ON CANCER

# 13th

Every thirteenth new cancer patient in the world happens to be an Indian

# 7.5%

of total cancer cases in the world also happen to be in India

# 10,00,000

CASES

of cancer detected in India every year now. There are about 2-2.5 million cancer patients in the country at any given point of time.

# 6,50,000

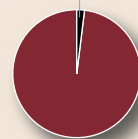
is the number of victims claimed by cancer annually, estimated to rise to 16.5 lakh by 2035, equivalent to about 25 per cent of the same in Western Europe



# 2%

OF THE WORLD GDP

is knocked off by cancer. No one knows what the figures are for India.



## COST OF CANCER

WITH LITTLE SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT, HIGH TREATMENT COSTS PUSH PATIENTS INTO FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

### Burden of late detection

Detected in advanced stages, 45 per cent of Indian families with a cancer patient are forced into debt; 25 per cent are pushed below the poverty line



### In government hospitals

# Rs 36,812

the average cost of cancer care per patient in a government hospital like the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi



### In private hospitals

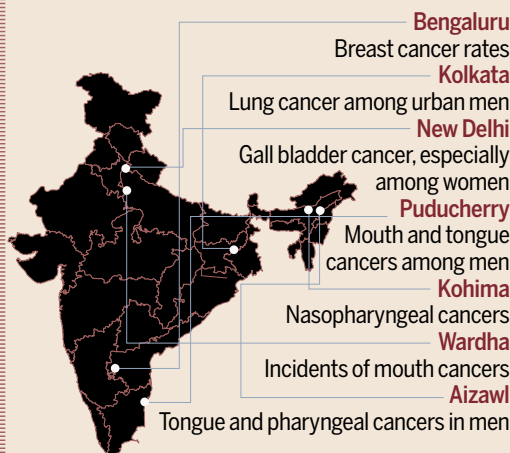
# Rs 2-8 lakh

is the average range for cancer treatment per patient in private hospitals in India



## MAP OF UPSURGE

PARTS OF THE COUNTRY WITH THE WORLD'S HIGHEST CANCER RATES



**The highest rate of cancer in India:**  
Aizawl district of Mizoram (168.2 men and 149.5 women per 1,00,000)



# TING CER

THE BAD AND  
LY ON THE  
ER FRONT

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

SCIENCE HAS A FEW PLEASANT SURPRISES IN STORE



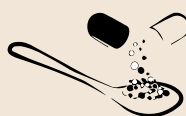
### LIQUID BIOPSY

Instead of traditional biopsy, researchers are moving toward advanced methods, where fast DNA-sequencing machines require simple blood tests to detect tumour cells in the body



### KEY ENZYME

The enzyme MLL1 causes age-related cancer, reports a study in the January issue of *Journal Genes & Development*. Inhibiting it can prevent damage. Expect a drug breakthrough.



### PROTON BEAMS

Conventional X-ray radiotherapy may soon give way to proton beams, reports *Lancet Oncology* in its January issue. High-energy protons help target tumours, especially in the spine, brain, prostate, lung and liver.



## 50% OF CANCERS ARE CAUSED BY LIFESTYLE FACTORS THAT YOU CAN CONTROL



Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco



Air pollution and radiation



Obesity and inactivity



Low fruit and veg diet



Alcohol abuse



Infection by bacteria like HPV



Processed and red meats



Low-fibre diets



High-salt diets



Hormone replacement therapy

## MISSED CUES

**80%** patients in India consult doctors after their cancer has crossed the stage from which recovery is rare

**70%** lives touched by cancer are snuffed out in the very first year in India, due to late detection

**60%** cancer patients first go to GPs. Cancer is not something they suspect, leading to delays.

## MISSING ONCOLOGISTS

AN ACUTE SHORTAGE OF ONCOLOGISTS STARES THE NATION IN THE FACE ADVERSELY AFFECTING CANCER CARE

**1,000**

number of trained oncologists  
(doctor-patient ratio of 1:2,000)



**40,000**

number of cardiologists in India  
(doctor-patient ratio of 1:1,125)



**Rs 25k-80k**

That's all cancer specialists can hope to earn per month for years, despite their difficult and time-consuming work



# DIVA, INTER ALIA

With Deepika Padukone and Priyanka Chopra busy making careers in Hollywood and others lying low, **Alia Bhatt** looks set to be the prima donna of 2016. With *Kapoor & Sons* and *Udta Punjab* wrapped up, the 22-year-old is currently shooting for Gauri Shinde's next in Goa in which she shares screen space, as of now, with Ali Zafar, Kunal Kapoor and Shah Rukh Khan. Now, that's how you holiday in Goa!

## RIDING HIGH

**Chandrakumar's** book *Lock-up* inspired the story of Vetrimaaran's critically-acclaimed film, *Visaaranai*. Now, the auto driver-



turned-author's upcoming book has made an impact on a young, rookie filmmaker even before it has been written.

Chandrakumar's next, *Veppamattravelloliyil*, follows the emotional journey of a woman over 24 hours.



## HE'S GOT THE LOOK

Comedian and *Mastizaade* actor **Vir Das** is unrecognisable as he gears up for *31st October*, a biopic on the life of riot survivor

Davinder Singh. It took four make-up artists and six hours of make-up—three to wear it and three to remove it—to transform the 28-year-old into a 65-year-old.



## GAL POWER

After *3 Idiots*, it is the turn of another Bollywood hit to head south. Kangana Ranaut-starrer *Queen* is slated for Tamil and Telugu remakes. The ladies-driven project will also have a woman director in actor-filmmaker **Revathy** and dialogues written by Suhasani Mani Ratnam. The hunt for Rani is still on.

## HOW WAS THE WEEK?



### GOOD

**Kanu Behl**

His film *Titli* gets the Best First Foreign Film Award, conferred by the French Syndicate of Cinema Critics 2016.



### BAD

**Nayanthara**

The actor's detention at the Kuala Lumpur airport results in a rash of baseless rumours

■ Compiled by **Suhani Singh**  
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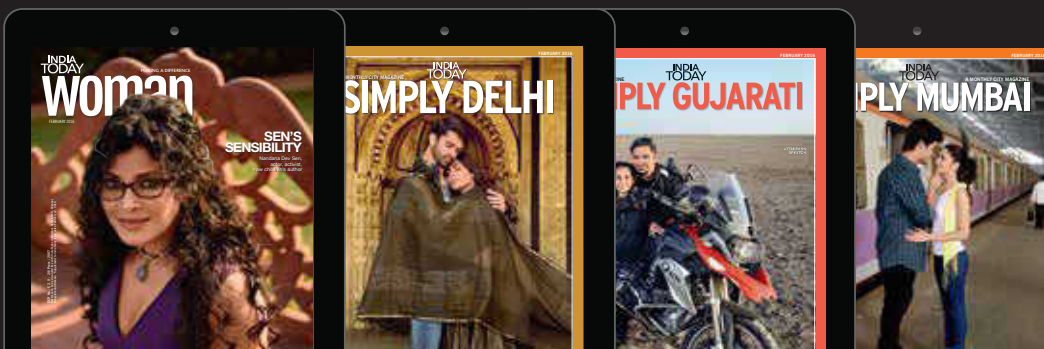
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INDIA  
TODAY

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# Woman

FEBRUARY 2016

## SEN'S SENSIBILITY

Nandana Dev Sen,  
actor, activist,  
now children's author

DCP No.: F. 2, (1 - 20) Press / 2007  
Not for sale. To be circulated free with India Today in Mumbai, Delhi & NCR, Chennai,  
Bangalore and Kolkata. "Supplement to India Today issue dated February 22, 2016"

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**Vol. 10 Number 2; February 2016**

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Printed and published by Ashish Kumar Bagga on behalf of Living Media India Limited.

Printed at Thomson Press India Limited, 18-35

Milestone, Delhi Mathura Road,

Faridabad-121007, (Haryana) and at A-9,

Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar, District Kancheepuram-603209, (Tamil Nadu).

Published at K-9, Connaught Circus,

New Delhi-110001. Editor: Kaveree Bamzai.

• India Today does not take responsibility for returning unsolicited publication material.

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STYLIST SAURAV BHANOT

DRESS FROM MAX MARA

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*What do you think about extending maternity leave to eight months?*



IMAGES BAZAAR

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

### READERS WRITE IN

- ☑ It is an idea that should be welcomed by one and all. Women who give birth, and this includes even those who have normal deliveries, take time to recover and they also have to nurse the newborn which is a 24x7 job. Their bodies too have to recoup from the rigours of childbirth. An eight months paid leave would come as a boon to working women and enable them to do full justice to their jobs as mothers and also restore them to the pink of health once again. **Vijaylakshmi A, Bangalore**
- ☑ This duration of leave is important; it gives women a month off before the birth of a child and a month after to transition the child to other foods. The World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines say new mothers should exclusively breastfeed their babies for at least half a year to reduce rates of malnutrition, lower risks of diarrhoea, increase cognitive development and other benefits for their newborn children. **Ritika Kalra, Gurgaon**
- ☑ I feel it's a necessary move to extend the maternity leave for working women to eight months. After a baby is born, it needs feeding at regular intervals that only a mother can provide. Besides, her body too needs to rejuvenate and recuperate post-childbirth. **Sujata Mukherjee, New Delhi**



Ten winning letters from the India Today Woman online poll will receive a Lakme gift hamper. Winners will be notified by email. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

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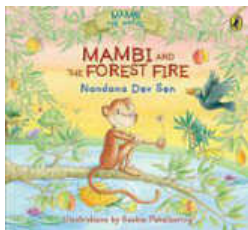
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# “I’ve changed my life around several times”

ACTOR, ACTIVIST, NEWLY MINTED CHILDREN’S AUTHOR, NANDANA DEV SEN MOVES AS EASILY BETWEEN THREE PROFESSIONS AS SHE DOES BETWEEN THREE CONTINENTS



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By **KAVEREE BAMZAI**

**N**andana Dev Sen doesn’t believe in doing anything half-heartedly. Whether it is writing a new children’s book, *Mambi and The Forest Fire*, talking about child rights, or dancing sinuously with Randeep Hooda clad only in body paint and loads of confidence for *Rang Rasiya*, 2014, the actor, writer and activist has always put herself out there. Coming from a background of obsessive discourse and argumentation, which she loves equally, acting was new, exciting, and even a bit scary, “to be in a profession where your emotions are laid bare all the time.”

At 48, the eternal rebel in her shows no signs of slowing down. She’s always pushed the envelope, gently, beginning with the choice of college. Her family was very keen that she apply to Oxbridge, but she wanted to study in the US. Leaving home was her first big “grown-up” decision—and she didn’t want to choose a country that we had been colonised by for 200 years. At Harvard, she was torn

between film and writing, but made the choice to study literature. “It was fantastic to have access to writers such as Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott, Toni Morrison and Octavio Paz,” she recalls.

After graduating, she became a literature editor at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, educational and trade publisher in the US, and at the same time, started making short films on Super 8. “I was very excited when I was accepted into the Peter Stark Producing Program at the USC School of Cinematic Arts, for an MFA (Master of Fine Arts). It was totally different from Harvard, but I enjoyed it just as much, and had great fun writing and directing my thesis film, *Arranged Marriage*.” Back in Kolkata for winter vacations, she got cast as Gudia in Goutam Ghosh’s movie in 1997. “When he offered me this role, I asked, could I please be your assistant instead? But Goutamda convinced me to say yes by assuring me I could do both. It was a great opportunity to be on a real movie set, but I quickly realised that shuttling between playing the female

lead and being an assistant director was just not feasible (and Goutamda had known that all along). So, I fell into acting entirely by accident, but I loved it.”

*Gudia* was officially selected at Cannes, and suddenly she found herself with agents in London as well as New York. Based out of New York, she got quite busy doing theatre and independent films. The acting job that first brought her to Mumbai was a play in Prithvi Theatre, *30 Days in September*, commissioned by RAHI (Recovering and Healing from Incest), an NGO; she originated the role of the protagonist, a young survivor of child sexual abuse. Out of the play, she got cast in a number of advertisements including Cadbury, Close-up, Pond’s, Pizza Hut, Slice, Colgate, Titan, and many more, which in turn led to film offers. Having left home very young, she had always wanted to come back to work in India as an adult, and when George Bush got re-elected in 2005, it seemed like a good time not to return to the US and buy a home in India instead.

“I have always been





Optimist forever  
Nandana Dev Sen

PHOTOGRAPH M ZHAZO  
SKIRT MAX MARA  
TOP LOFT



drawn to doing atypical movies with super talented filmmakers, in India as all as abroad,” she says. So there was Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s *Black* in 2005 (her first film to be released in India); *My Wife’s Murder*, 2005, with Ram Gopal Verma; *Strangers* in 2007 with Aanand Rai; *Rang Rasiya* with Ketan Mehta; *The War Within*, 2005, by Magnolia Films, among others. “Virtually all the films I have ever chosen to do have had a strong social conscience, as well as a great aesthetic sensibility. I must say that it was because I continued to do advertisements and endorsements, which were quite lucrative, and I must have done over 30 in my time in Mumbai, that I could keep being eccentric in my choice of films,” she says. Sometimes, a little too eccentric, as in the unintentionally hilarious *Prince*, in 2010, where she played opposite Vivek Oberoi; she always wanted to do an action film because she was secretly convinced that it would cure her of clumsiness. Well, she trained hard, became quite impressive in martial arts, was hell-on-wheels on a motorbike, did the majority of stunts herself, and remained as klutzy as ever.

Then Barack Obama got elected, and it seemed like the right time to start looking for a place to buy in the US.

It couldn’t have been easy; as the daughter of



FAMILY TIES Nandana (centre) with her father Amartya Sen and mother Nabaneeta Dev

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and poetry goddess Nabaneeta Dev Sen, she will always have a suffix attached to her name. But it doesn’t seem to weigh on her elegant shoulders as she squints into the winter sun while turning this way and that for the photographer on the terrace of Taj Mahal Hotel, Delhi. She is in her sexiest librarian attire, her hair a mass of trademark curls, a pair of spectacles perched on her nose, and her brow scrunched as she answers questions.

“I’m very close to both my parents, and they have always placed a lot of trust in me. Right from my childhood I never felt any kind of pressure about being their child—not just because I was always a good student, but because my family (including my grandmothers) gave me a great deal of freedom and emotional support. Because both Ma and Baba are trailblazers in their own way, they had faith in all my unconventional decisions, and instilled a great deal of confidence in

me. I’ve changed my life around several times and, miraculously, never felt scared of failure,” she says.

The new book for children (dedicated to her nephews and nieces by her three siblings, Antara, Kabir and Indrani) has sparked a new season of creativity. There are four more children’s books on the anvil, a sort-of-memoir tracing the evolution of a woman-powered literary and political identity, seen through the eyes of three generations of rule-breaking

THE ETERNAL REBEL IN HER SHOWS NO SIGNS OF SLOWING DOWN. SHE’S ALWAYS PUSHED THE ENVELOPE, BEGINNING WITH THE CHOICE OF COLLEGE.



Bengali women. In many ways, this will be the story of her fearless foremothers. She is equally thrilled that a feature script she's written—set in the codependent worlds of cinema, journalism, and politics in Mumbai—has gained a lot of traction lately. She is also developing this into a novel, represented by the literary agent Andrew Wylie.

So is she an actor who writes or a writer who acts? “Both, I don’t believe in binary definitions of my identity. It’s not a coincidence that my acting, writing and advocacy frequently intersect with one another. Acting and writing have always complemented each other in my life; I believe in the transformative capacity of cinema as much as I trust in the power of words and books (especially children’s books).” And the choices she makes in each medium; including the script she wrote most recently; are often shaped by her fight against child abuse and gender-based violence. This work has been an important and consistent part of her life, whether as a volunteer in Boston (ATASK); an ambassador for RAHI and Operation Smile; an advocate for UNICEF and Terre des Hommes Foundation; or as jury member in public hearings for the National Commission of Protection of Child Rights.

Srjit Mukherji, her director in *Autograph*, 2010, finds her to be “very methodical. That she’s gone to Lee Strasberg shows. She isn’t what I would say a very instinctive actor but very method and theory-based.

## NEVER LET A FIGHT FESTER

Happy Valentine’s Day, everyone. I’m not at all sure that I’m the right person to give love advice, but here are some observations—for young women as well as young men, straight or LGBT—on what I feel makes the best relationships work.

- ▶ Make him feel confident that you have his back. The longest study in human happiness (now led by a friend at Harvard) revealed that the most “connected” couples aren’t necessarily the ones who never fight, but the ones who feel sure, even if they quibble a lot, that they can rely on their partners’ unconditional support in any crisis.
- ▶ Love him for his imperfections, not only his strong points. For example, if you have glorious hair, boys and girls (and their grandmothers) will heap compliments on you, but how wonderful is it that he adores your crooked tooth? I, for one, am incurably klutzy, and have always been partial to guys who found that cute. In fact, I married one.
- ▶ Be transparent. Clear communication makes all the difference in a relationship. So, if there’s something you desperately want (anything from a back rub to a marriage proposal on Valentine’s Day), or if something is really worrying you (whether it’s your job, your best friend, or your sex life), find your own way of letting your partner know. We shouldn’t expect them to read our minds, should we? Nor should we assume we’re doing them a favour by not sharing our worries with them. *Au contraire*.
- ▶ Don’t stop playing, no matter how grown-up you are. It’s very important to let yourself be silly sometimes. Relationships give us a lovely opportunity of reconnect with the child within us—and it feels so good to make each other laugh, doesn’t it? Tensions are, of course, unavoidable in any long-term relationship, but humour is a great way to defuse them; never let a fight fester into a crisis.
- ▶ Find time to hug and kiss a lot, no matter how busy you are, or how many children you need to put to sleep, or what your age is. We all crave physical affection, and we know it goes hand in hand with emotional intimacy. Plus, it’s super fun.

by Nandana Dev Sen

We are great friends and she’s one of the most well-read, erudite women I have come across. She plays the urban elite woman really well. Having said that, her diverse interests and erudition adds not just to her identity as an actor but also as a human being.” She’s been reading several scripts in the last year since the release of *Rang Rasiya*, which brought a new burst of offers for work. Now married to legendary Penguin Random House chairman John Makinson, they prioritise spending as much time as they can with each other (and when they are apart, they speak to each other many times every day). “Yes, living in three continents and dividing my time between three vocations have inherent challenges, but we are very good at taking turns being the supportive spouse. January was a particularly busy month for me, with the launch of the Mambi series as well as a book of my translations of my mother’s poetry, titled *Make Up Your Mind*. It was wonderful that a super busy guy like John was right by my side throughout. The best thing about being married is perhaps the truest cliché in the world: it’s so precious to share your every experience with the one you love.” Shobhaa De, who is her “Soul Mother” speaks glowingly of her: “I enjoy her mind. She is sensitive, passionate, committed. We love them both and call John our jamai babu.”

And Nandana, stubborn, absent-minded, emotional, optimistic, argumentative, is the quintessential India’s daughter.

# A SEASON FOR MOTHERHOOD

DIANA HAYDEN HOPES TO INSPIRE MORE WOMEN TO  
FREEZE THEIR EGGS AND GIVE THEMSELVES THE CHOICE  
OF LIVING LIFE ON THEIR OWN TERMS

By MOEENA HALIM

**D**iana Hayden walks into the doctor's clinic brimming with happiness; Arya, her four-week-old baby girl, swaddled in a pink and grey wrap, is nestled comfortably in her arms. Both mother and daughter are pink-cheeked with contentment. Eight years ago, a medical procedure brought the actor-cum-model a sense of relief and freedom from the pressures of a ticking biological clock. Today, it has offered the 42-year-old a near miraculous chance at motherhood. "I truly feel like I have it all," gushes the usually tight-lipped Hayden. Always shying away from talks of her personal life, she has decided to share the intimate details of her story in the hope that she can inspire other young women.

## THE BACK-UP PLAN

At a time when little was known about the process of freezing eggs and when several doctors, not knowing enough about the technology, were not suggesting it for lifestyle reasons, Hayden underwent a procedure to have 16 of her eggs frozen through the vitrification technique. "I am a voracious reader and I happened to



Diana Hayden with  
her baby girl

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MANDAR DEODHAR





(from left) Dr Hrishikesh Pai and Dr Nandita Palshetkar, IVF specialists, Lilavati Hospital, Mumbai

### DECODING THE VITRIFICATION PROCEDURE

- ▶ While a woman produces one egg at a time, we give hormone injections to induce production of 10 to 15 eggs at a time.
- ▶ The growth of eggs is followed using an ultrasound. The ova (eggs) are picked up in a 15-minute procedure; we introduce a trigger which ruptures eggs, but before they do, we use a needle and suck them out through the vagina.
- ▶ The eggs are checked for maturity and mature ones are frozen. As normal body temperature is 37 degrees, we bring it down to -197 degrees. The speed of the drop in temperature has to be -25,000 degrees per second.
- ▶ We maintain the same temperature while in storage. As long as we maintain that, the eggs should be usable even a decade down the road.
- ▶ The freezing procedure costs ₹50,000 annually and ₹1.5 lakh per IVF cycle.

come across some material about freezing eggs. It was mainly being used in cases of cancer in US and Australia, as a way to allow the patient to have a child once they had overcome the disease. But I couldn't see why I shouldn't opt for the same procedure to allow me the freedom to put motherhood on hold," says Hayden, who was 32 then.

In spite of her maternal instincts, the self-confessed die hard romantic wasn't ready for parenthood in her early '30s. She was keen on focussing on her career and wanted to start a family only when she had found the right man to marry. "I had no pressure from the family, no one breathing down my neck telling me to have children and settle down, but all the same, I could feel my biological clock ticking," she says. Confiding only in her closest friends about her plans then, Hayden laughs now about how they thought she was insane for considering something so outlandish. There was also a sense of fear on their part; of an unknown medical procedure and the consequences of it. "Back then, the procedure wasn't recognised by the American Society of Reproductive Medicine. It wasn't until 2012 that vitrification of eggs became a standard procedure," reveals Dr Hrishikesh Pai who, along with Dr Nandita Palshetkar, both IVF specialists, Lilavati Hospital, Mumbai, brought this modern technology to India in 2006.

Introduced to Dr Palshetkar by a friend, Hayden was thrilled to know that the technology had reached Indian shores.

A meeting with the infertility specialist at Lilavati Hospital was all she needed to realise that the procedure was right choice for her and in October 2007, less than a year after the doctors introduced the technology, Hayden had her eggs frozen over two sittings.

### CLAIMING INSURANCE

Gushing and gurgling over Arya, the newly minted mother chides her little one over the frown forming across her forehead. "She's got her father's frown," she says looking up. Hayden met Arya's father, Collin Dick, when she was 39, and the duo got married a year later. When they decided to start a family, Hayden realised she was suffering from endometriosis. "It's a common condition, which reduces production of eggs and is responsible for about 30 per cent of the failure of in vitro fertility (IVF) treatments in the country," says Dr Palshetkar.

If it hadn't been for the eggs she had frozen eight years ago, she might have had a much harder time conceiving a child. But until then, it had not occurred to Hayden that she might actually need to use her frozen eggs. "It had literally been like a medical insurance policy. You do it, but you hope you never have to use it," she says. "I did it because I'm romantic but also extremely practical. I never wanted to be in a position where I'd have to ask myself 'what if'." Hayden was unable to inspire friends or cousins to follow her lead back then. "It seemed too far-fetched, but now that I have a baby, it all seems more tangible,"

she says. Dr Palshetkar hopes more young women are inspired to allow themselves the chance to live life on their own terms.

"A woman was telling me the other day about her 25-year-old daughter getting admission into one of US's biggest hospitals. But she didn't want her to go, because it would be 10 years before her daughter would be done with the course. 'She'll be 35. What about her wedding,' she told me. And it was heartbreaking," rues the doctor. On the bright side, the pioneering IVF specialist has already started getting patients dragged in by their mothers.

The idea of being able to cheat the biological clock might seem enticing to young women, but Hayden is quick to clarify her stance. While the advancement of science offers us this opportunity, no doctor can control implantation. "That is only in God's hands," she says. Hayden and her husband, Collin Dick, who works at an international NGO in Mumbai, got second time lucky with a healthy 3.7 kg baby girl. The hands-on parents are enjoying every moment of their new lives. "On the first day, I had to give Collin an Advil because he'd been tilting his head to look at Arya constantly and his neck had begun to hurt," she says.

Hoping that they will be able to have a second child soon, the only heartbreak she faces now is when Arya gets red-faced with colic. But right at this moment, in the doctor's clinic, the serenity on their faces lends to the perfect happy ending.

# Mean Machines

EQUIPMENTS FOR NOT ONLY A WHOLESOME WORKOUT,  
BUT ALSO TO EXERCISE YOUR SOUL, MIND AND BODY

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A homemaker, a professional with career of her own and a socially active person; a woman is all these and more rolled into one. Juggling multiple roles at the same time and on her toes 24x7, she is bound to feel stressed and overwhelmed with every day wear and tear. Not to say she needs to be in the best of health, a lot more fitter and aware of what's good for her and what's not when it comes to lifestyle issues.

Staying physically active is far more likely to determine a woman's future risk of heart disease, obesity and high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, back pain and joint pain. It is beneficial, therefore, that she maintains optimum weight. A regulated exercise regime, staying active and a nutritious diet are most important at all stages of life. Eating sensible meals, avoiding after dinner snacks and making exercise a part of daily life are significant ways to control weight and lower the risk of health problems. Working out also enhances mental performance and improves productivity levels.

The real picture is different though. Most women don't get sufficient time for themselves when it comes to health and fitness, and they have the tendency to avoid it most of the times.







### WHY EXERCISE?

- » Exercise helps to reduce dementia and osteoporosis risk, it also prevents muscle loss
- » It improves digestion which results in beautiful and glowing skin
- » Workout is a great stress buster and helps get you out of depression and kills anxiety
- » Exercise not only gives a fit body but also helps in keeping the mind strong

Making family, career and children their priority, they often forget about their own health. But they need to understand the importance of exercise in their life; they in fact need to train smart. Women have become more technology dependent which has made their life easier but it has also made them less active; because of which they move around less and burn less energy. Doing less physical work increases their risk of cardiovascular disease.

There has been a boom in the variety of workout equipment available in the market for women. They just need to choose these tools carefully and wisely depending on their health concerns. Here are five must-haves for them to stay fit.

**Treadmill** It not only burns calories but also reduces your risk of cardiovascular diseases by lowering blood pressure and improving your cholesterol levels. Running on the treadmill also strengthens heart and lungs. The USP is that with the

treadmill, you can adjust the speed and incline to vary your workout plan.

**Price** ₹10,000 - ₹1 lakh

**Cross Trainer** It is a full body workout machine designed to tone various body parts with a fluid, low impact motion. It provides a similar kind of workout as jogging but doesn't put any stress on your back and joints; your limbs remain in continuous contact with the machine, its operation limits the impact to your joints. It is a great training exercise as it works on your whole body.

**Price** ₹15,000 - ₹1.5 lakh

**Rower** The rowing machine is a 20-minute calorie burning machine. It is an effective way to raise heart rate and

increase oxygen uptake. The adjustable resistance on most rowers lets you easily work up to your target heart rate as well as slow back down to your resting rate. The rowing machine works on shoulders, the upper back, lower back as well as biceps. The strong grip required on the oars produces stronger hands and wrists. Using a rowing machine is one of the best exercises for building back, arms and chest muscles and it is a complete body workout. It is an endurance exercise that increases functioning of the heart and uses carbohydrates to provide the energy required to exercise. The machine is also a good option for those women who suffer from joint pains.

**Price** ₹10,000 - ₹1.5 lakh

**Spin cycle** Spin cycle is an excellent way to burn calories and relieve stress. This form of workout focuses more on the core muscles, buttock and thighs. Pedalling a cycle is extremely useful for women who suffer from arthritis. It comes under low impact exercises which means it doesn't put pressure on knees and joints, as compared to other aerobic or running exercises.

**Price** ₹15,000 - ₹1 lakh

**Multi Gym** It is a fabulous machine to get that lean toned beach body that every woman wants. Strength exercises for women are equally important as they are for men. And multi gym is a universal machine, it has versatile exercise options that works on all parts of the body. It's great for concentrating on a women's problem areas such as buttocks and is completely safe for them. It has a great range of fundamental exercises, even for starters. It also helps women reduce stress levels and fight depression. Multi gym works on the muscles of your chest, shoulders, triceps, biceps, upper abdominal and quadriceps.

**Price** ₹10,000 - ₹1 lakh

Women need to be more active, and they can make workout a part of their life.



**RIDHIKA DEWAN KHANNA**  
Director Marketing,  
Cardio Fitness India,  
Mumbai

# Are you Eating Right?

COMBAT DEPRESSION, INCLUDE THESE HEALING FOODS IN YOUR EVERY DAY DIET

A woman in her mid-30s approached me with symptoms of depression, feelings of worthlessness, crying spells, lack of sleep and appetite. A gentleman, also in his mid-30s, approached me with similar complaints. Along with medication and therapy, both were advised to follow a

nutritious diet, exercise regularly and avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks and other intoxicants. While the man followed my diet and exercise plan, the woman resorted to comfort food and alcohol when she felt low. Her mood became labile. She would feel excited on some days and sad on other days, therefore taking longer

to feel comfortable. The role of food in psychological well-being therefore is quite important.

In Indian culture, hospitality is associated with the wide platter of delicacies. Here, nothing happens without a feast. In this MasterChef age, the experience of cooking, creating an ambience,

## THE GOOD MOOD FOOD GUIDE

### BETA-CAROTENE (VITAMIN A)

Apricots, broccoli, cantaloupe, carrots, collards, peaches, pumpkin, spinach, sweet potato

**VITAMIN C** Blueberries, broccoli, grapes, kiwi, oranges, peppers, potatoes, strawberries, tomato

**VITAMIN E** Margarine, nuts, seeds, vegetable oils

**TRYPTOPHAN** Turkey, tuna, chicken, milk, banana

**PROTEINS** Beans, peas, low-fat cheese, fish, milk, poultry, soy products, yoghurt

**SELENIUM** Beans, legumes, lean meat, low fat dairy products, sea food, nuts, wholegrains

**OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS** Fatty fish, flax seed, nuts, soybean oil, walnuts, leafy vegetables

**ANTIOXIDANTS** Artichokes, cabbage, broccoli, asparagus, avocados, beetroot, spinach, pecans, walnuts, hazelnuts, pistachio, almonds, cashew nuts, macadamia nuts, peanut butter

**PROBIOTIC SUBSTANCES** Yoghurt, miso soup, dark chocolate



IMAGES BAZAAR



presentation and serving, food tasting and fine dining have added an aura around food. Although cooking is seen as a therapeutic process, the overall gastronomic experience leads to overeating in most cases.

The consumption of junk food has increased over the years. Taste has overpowered the nutritional importance of food. As the prevalence of obesity is increasing, the number of lifestyle diseases and psychological disturbances among the obese is also increasing. Getting over obesity with bariatric surgery, liposuction and laxatives also adds to stress and onset of depression. At the same time, the socially desirable body image urges women to use extensive measures to control their weight, leading to anorexia or bulimia. These body image illnesses have a

major mood component. On the other end of the spectrum, psychological well-being faces challenges from malnourishment. It has become important to assess the relationship between food and mood.

In traditional medicine, healthy diet was considered essential for longevity and psychological happiness. The mention of sattvic, rajasic and tamasic food in the ancient scriptures and their implications on health reveals the important role of diet. Although introduced in India, the concept of food affecting mood remained unexplored. Unfortunately, the nutritional aspect of depression has come into the forefront only recently. Nutritional neuroscience is a relatively new field of study related to psychological health. The European organisation, CORDIS (Community Research and Development Information Service) has undertaken multi-country MoodFood projects to explore the diet, obesity and mood relationship. However, controlled studies in this area especially in India are lacking.

Depression is now considered as a biological illness. Along with sad mood, feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness and helplessness, depression also affects the biological rhythms of sleep and appetite. The relationship between depression and diet is like a two-edged sword. Severely depressed patients may lose five to six kilos of weight, disproportionate to

their eating while moderately depressed people may put on that much weight. There could be an increase or decrease in appetite, erratic hunger pangs and craving for sugar-filled or carbohydrate-rich food. As depression can cause a change in appetite, weight can also influence mood. Obesity and overeating has in fact achieved the status of being an epidemic.

So what's the solution? Here are tips to help you eat a balanced diet, avoid certain foods and indulge in others in order to come out of depression.

**1** Eat a nutritious meal. Nutrients support the body's growth, recovery as well as general health. Include vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, protein and even fat in your daily diet. Conditions such as iron deficiency, anaemia and vitamin B12 deficiency can give rise to classical symptoms of depression.

**2** Fill your plate with essential antioxidants. Antioxidants such as beta-carotene and vitamin C and E help reduce the damaging effect of free radical molecules. Depression tends to produce tissue damage and antioxidants help repair that.

**3** Add probiotic substances in your diet. The association of good bacteria with behavioural changes have been explored. People with chronic fatigue and low moods have been found to feel much better with probiotic diet.

**4** Include omega-3 fatty acids, selenium, folate and vitamin D in your diet. Intake of selenium through food rather than supplements is extremely beneficial in depression.

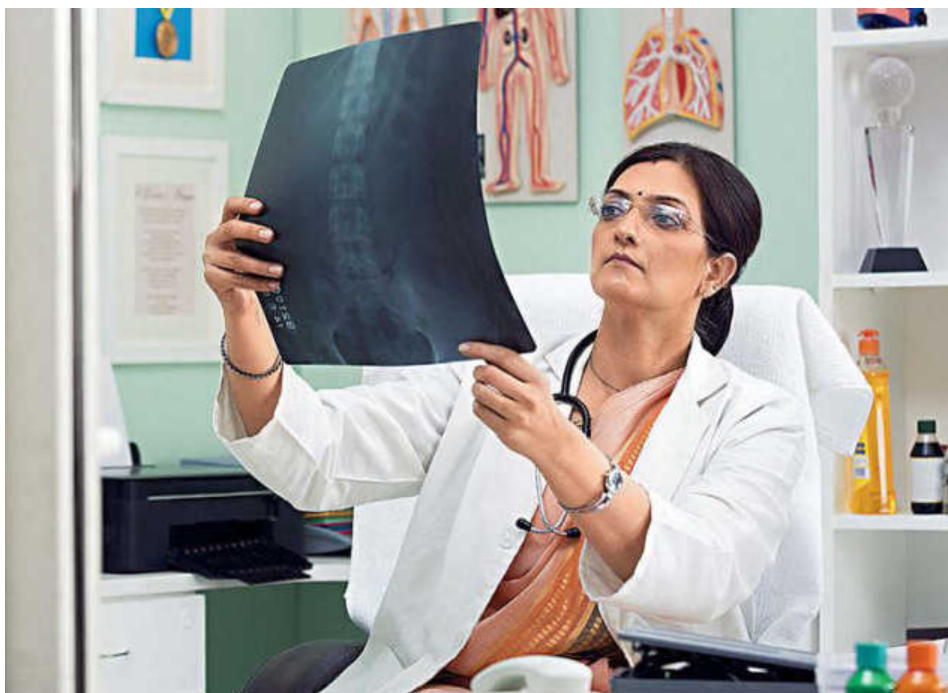
**5** Maintain a healthy lifestyle. Having a regular exercise regime is helpful in preventing as well as recovering from depression.

**6** Regular check-up for diabetes, thyroid dysregulation and cholesterol levels can help monitor food-related lifestyle illnesses. These diseases play an important role in the regulation of mood.

**7** Follow a regular dietary pattern. Irregular eating patterns, varying portions of meals, frequent intake of junk food, and eating comfort food when stressed can exacerbate mood changes. Eating meals at regular intervals, consuming a variety of dishes, sticking to a Mediterranean-style of diet including fruits, vegetables, cereals, legumes and fish can help accelerate the healing process.



**DR ASHIT SHETH**  
MD, Consulting psychiatrist and hypnotherapist, Honorary Professor of Psychiatry, Bombay Hospital, Mumbai



# SKIN AND BONES

IT'S ONE OF THE MOST COMMON AILMENTS TROUBLING WOMEN. HERE'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OSTEOPOROSIS.



**DR MATHANKUMAR MOHANDOSS**  
Physiotherapist and Ergonomist,  
The Recover Clinic, Delhi

Often called the brittle bone disease, osteoporosis is a condition in which the density of the bone is reduced making it fragile and prone to easy fractures compared to normal bones. In osteoporosis, bones lose minerals, such as calcium, more quickly than the body can replace them, leading to a loss of bone thickness. As a result, bones become thinner and less dense.

## HIGH RISK GROUPS

Generally women have less bone stock than men. Bone density increases gradually with age and reaches a high peak value at 18 in women and 20 in men. Estrogen, a hormone in women that protects bones, decreases sharply when women reach menopause, which makes the problem even worse. Bone loss is approximately between 1 per cent and 5 per year after menopause. Though there is no clear data available, the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF), estimates that osteoporosis affects about 200 million women worldwide.

## DON'T BLAME ONLY THE HORMONES

Though hormones are one of the major factors, they aren't the only reason behind the ailment. Some of the other

controllable and modifiable factors responsible are

- ▶ Sedentary lifestyle
- ▶ Inadequate calcium and Vitamin D intake
- ▶ Less exposure to sunlight
- ▶ Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption
- ▶ Low body weight

## WHAT'S THE DIAGNOSIS

Osteoporosis is a silent disease and it often progresses without any symptoms or pain. Notable loss in height and presence of Dowager's hump, a outward curvature noted in the spine, are most usual signs of it. Doing a bone density test is a must; dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) scanning is the most appropriate method to know about bone density. The calculated value of the test is called T-score and a value of -2.5 or lesser is considered to be osteoporotic.

While value score of -1 or more is normal, the T-score between -1 and -2.5 is termed as osteopenic. Osteopenia is considered a borderline bone weakness which could progress into osteoporosis if no preventive measures are taken. Ultrasound scanning is also an option but can be used only as a screening tool.

## MEASURES TO BE TAKEN

- ▶ Adequate intake of calcium
- ▶ Adequate Vitamin D
- ▶ Cessation of smoking and reducing alcohol intake
- ▶ Regular exercise
- ▶ BMD (bone mineral density screening after 40 years
- ▶ Hormonal therapy after menopause, after surgical removal of ovaries and other problems in the liver and kidneys.

## GETTING IT TREATED

Treatment helps to reduce risk of fractures and improve bone health, but doesn't cure the problem completely. Once diagnosed with osteoporosis, drug therapy becomes important. There are several options available which include drugs with bisphosphonates, calcitonin and hormonal therapy. Getting advice from the physician is important and the kind of therapy and dosage could be suggested only by a physician. Surgical management like vertebroplasty, in which bone mass is injected into the vertebra involved, for back pain and joint replacement for hip fractures are other effective methods. Weight bearing exercises are the best conservative methods and whole body vibration therapy is a method which has been scientifically proven to be an option for conservative management. Prevention of fall and other injuries becomes important as fragile bones can fracture easily.





SHUTTERSTOCK

# HOW TO INVEST SMART

FINANCIAL PLANNING IS SERIOUS BUSINESS; KNOW WHERE TO PUT YOUR MONEY AND REAP GOOD RETURNS



**TEJAL GANDHI**  
Founder & CEO,  
Money Matters,  
Mumbai

**1** Be clear of the objective behind investing your money as that will help you to decide where you want to put it. Once the goal is clear, then the investment vehicle is easy to choose. It is always better if you have it tracked on a regular basis.

**2** Don't get misled or influenced by banks, wealth managers and other intermediaries in the financial field. While it is important that you follow an advisor, it would be but helpful to have some basic information of your own or you will be stuck with an investment which you may not need. Ask yourself how much of insurance do you actually need? Is there enough family cover? Are you aware of the returns? Many a time, your spouse would have taken adequate cover or his company may cover you and you may not be aware. Being in the know is your greatest tool.

**3** Understand the power of compounding. For example, if you invested ₹1,000 per month for five years, then returns in the initial two to three years do not show a significant increase. It is only over the last few compounding cycles that returns are seen growing. It often happens that we don't have the patience to wait and pull out money in between and complain that we did not get enough returns.

**4** Women should read and get themselves updated on all current options available in the market. There are lot of offers being made for women specifically by banks

and wealth management companies; it will help if you are aware of such a product offering and will not be taken for a ride.

**5** Maintain separate budgets for yourself and your family. This will help you to save for yourself in the future and you can use that surplus money to meet different goals like buying a house or simply to indulge when you want.

**6** Maintain only a minimum amount in fixed deposits which gives low yields and explore other high yielding investments like mutual funds or stocks. This will help you in times of high inflation.

**7** Don't depend on your spouse, father and brother when it comes to investment since this is your hard earned money. You should be solely taking the decision on where to invest.

**8** Understand your risk profile; if you are conservative then you can change it slowly over a period of time. You can go online and try out some risk profiling tools to know yourself and your risk appetite better.

**9** Start your retirement planning early so that you have a good surplus of money. You can start small with a monthly recurring deposit or go for SIP (systematic investment plan).

**10** Understand tax implications in whichever instrument you invest in. Reach out to a tax expert and if you are a joint holder, know the implications.

# Feeding Fussy Eaters

CORDON BLEU-TRAINED CHEF RAKHEE VASWANI, WHO HAS TAUGHT THE BASICS OF COOKING TO MANY, TURNS AUTHOR WITH HER BOOK ON HELPING CHILDREN ENJOY FOOD

By MOEENA HALIM



Chef Rakhee Vaswani cooking up a storm

If Yan can cook, so can you,” squeals chef Rakhee Vaswani, using her hands to imitate Chinese born, Hong Kong-American chef and food writer Martin Yan’s signature knife skills. Recalling the hugely popular show that aired in India in the 1990s, a time when Sanjeev Kapoor and Tarla Dalal were among

the select few Indian food personalities on television, Mumbai-based Vaswani talks about how obsessed she was with watching these food shows even as a child.

Hungry to learn different styles of cooking and constantly experimenting with food, she’d shadow her mother and her aunts in the kitchen. “I’d learn how to

make *koftas* (meatballs) from one, hakka noodles from another, and then come home and test the recipes,” she recalls. By the time she was 13, she was already preparing meals for her family. “Every time my mother cooked us a meal, I’d try and dress it up somehow. She’d complain bitterly about how I didn’t like her cooking,” she says.

## MEALTIME BATTLES

Admittedly picky about food, Vaswani confesses she had to be bribed by her father to have her daily dose of carrot juice. Perhaps not quite as fussy as she was then, Vaswani still believes it is important that food looks as appealing as it tastes. Her teenage children, one a budding chef-in-training at



The Culinary Institute of America, US, and the other a state-level swimmer, are just as particular. Having coped creatively with their fussy eating habits when they were younger, it is her trial and error solutions that led to her debut book *Picky Eaters: And Other Meal-Time Battles* published by Random House India and priced at ₹299.

The book, aimed at parents flustered by their picky eaters' mealtime habits, is a step by step guide to ensuring children get the required nutrition as well as an exciting meal to look forward to. Divided into two parts, Vaswani's handbook for handling fussy eaters is a combination of tips and tricks as well as a set of recipes suitable for different times of the day and special occasions. To begin with, the chef turned author encourages you to ask yourself questions and make observations about your child's behaviour, helping you ascertain whether or not you have a picky eater in the family. But rather than label it as cause for worry, she calls it out to be a common phenomenon that can be remedied without much trouble.

Eating together as a family, says Vaswani, is important. Stressing the need for positivity during mealtimes, she lets slip her clever strategy to introduce new foods on the sly. "Whenever I'm trying some new ingredient or a recipe, say for instance a dalia upma, I ask my cook to make me a small bowl while everyone else is served regular food. The children are instantly curious to know what I'm eating and want to taste it. Before I know it, my bowl has been wiped clean,"

she says. Afraid of giving away her secret to her children, Vaswani laughs about deliberately leaving this tip out of her book.

### KEEPING IT QUICK

Just like her childhood favourite chef Yan, and her current inspiration, gourmet and food writer, Nigella Lawson, the Cordon Bleu-trained chef's aim is to enable home cooks to churn out flavoursome meals in the quickest, easiest but most creative way possible. So, whether it is party classics such as ice cream pops, simple pan fried noodles or lunch box suggestions, she has ensured that her recipes can be easily recreated at home. Most importantly, she emphasises never spending too much time slaving over a meal that might be rejected.

### MAKING MEALS FUN

About six years ago, Vaswani decided to start teaching amateur cooks and set up the Palate Culinary Studio. "I've worked at several kitchens over the world and there's an adrenaline rush when you're working under pressure in a restaurant kitchen, but I now get a high from my students making things and being appreciated for their cooking skills," she says. Her students range from celebrity mothers such as Malaika Arora Khan, Mini Mathur, Radhika and Shaan, as well as young budding chefs who have grown up cooking at her studio. "I have a student who has been coming to me since she was five. She is now 14 years old and runs her own kitchen. Every time there's an event in school, she bakes hundreds of cupcakes," reveals Vaswani.

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## CHEF'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Children are often reluctant to eat their veggies; the trick is to find ways to sneak them into their food.

### CAPSICUM

Include capsicum in your food through rice. Chop up a few into tiny cubes, toss them with some herbs and olive oil and sauté them. Add the rice and toss again. Accompanied with a yummy sauce, your children won't even realise that they are eating capsicum.

### BROCCOLI

Children loathe broccoli and kick up a mighty fuss when forced to eat it. You can always skewer these babies with some other veggies and marinate them in spices for flavour. They even go well with dips like hummus or with some ranch dressing.

### SPINACH

Most children crib about the bitter taste of spinach but this can be masked easily. Why don't you try adding a blanched spinach layer to your lasagna? Your child will love this dish.

Everyone's a fan of *MasterChef* including children, observes Vaswani explaining the fact that picky eaters are now even more particular about what they want on their plates. In several cases, as in the case of the Vaswani family, travel and exposure to a range of cuisines has helped to open children's minds. "We always go to the best food joints when we travel and my children eat all kinds of exotic food now," says the chef. Also giving the example of Malaika Arora Khan's son Arhaan, Vaswani talks about the latter's very refined palate. "He has eaten so many different foods from caviar to sushi. He eats salmon with a side of spinach and other veggies for lunch every day. I remember getting a call from Malaika one day asking me for the recipe for soba noodles. Arhaan had asked her to make it for him," she says.

But not every family has the luxury of travelling, realises Vaswani, who hopes her recipes will help parents expose their children to global cuisine. "It is essential that the child learns to eat or at least taste all kinds of food," says Vaswani. Understanding the constraints of budgets and time, her book is not limited to a particular audience. Vaswani isn't particularly fixated on calorie control either, although she does make it a point to offer healthy suggestions wherever possible. She is already thinking of her next books, one dedicated to recipes and the other a second in the series of picky eaters. "I am counting on this one being a bestseller," she laughs.

# Lending a Helping Hand

CONCERNED ABOUT CARING FOR THE OLD AT HOME, ELINA DUTTA, FOUNDER, TRIBECA CARE, IS SHOWING OTHERS A NEW DIRECTION

By SHELLY ANAND

Getting older is hard any day. More so, when all you need is a phone call from your daughter, settled in another country, to enquire about your day or some five minutes of undivided attention from your son living in the same city, but with a maddening work schedule. Taking care of ageing parents from a distance is never easy. The helplessness and guilt of not being around when they need you has troubled most of us at some point of time.

It was a similar sentiment that bothered Elina Dutta, 55, former national creative director with 25 years of experience at advertising agencies like Lowe Lintas, JWT and Ogilvy, for long after her mother's death. Tied-up with work deadlines, she could hardly take out time to come visit her mother in Kolkata. The hurt of not being able to spend sufficient time with her stayed with Dutta, settled in Dubai with her family, and often troubled her. So much that it inspired her to launch a healthcare start-up Tribeca Care in 2013, to take care of lonely parents back at home, along with four other NRI friends with similar personal experiences, settled in the US and UK, and employed as doctors and bankers.

## SUPPORTING THE ELDERLY

Focused on taking care of the parents in their 60s, 70s and beyond, who have children with all the money in the world



Caregiver Elina Dutta

PHOTOGRAPH BY M ZHAZO

to send across to them but not the privilege of being physically around, Tribeca Care tries to fill that void. Operational only in Kolkata currently, the platform is a one-stop home healthcare company that delivers personalised attention ranging from doctor on call, help with hospitalisation and ambulance, emotional support, nursing care, medicines delivered at home and care managers when required. "I believe that when you are old, you must have the dignity of attention. When it comes to our parents, who are lonely and need help, why should they be abandoned and sent to old age homes,

when they can be looked after and given emotional support within the comfort of their own homes," says soft-spoken Dutta, Founder and Chief Strategy Officer, Tribeca Care, who shuttles between Dubai and Kolkata. With 36 employees, tie-up with 27 hospitals and 90,000 bedside visits annually since the launch, the platform has created an eco-system of its own to help and nurture the elderly.

## DELVING INTO THE NETWORK

Self-funded by five partners, including Dutta, Tribeca Care aims to serve both the elderly and the ailing. "We are not an

NGO but a social enterprise with a professionally managed business model and moderate amount of charge for the services offered," says Dutta. With a membership fee of ₹5,500 per month for taking the service, the caregivers are trained with help from geriatric associations. Stressing that they are like relationship care managers with one fixed point contact for every parent, Dutta says, "The needs of someone who is 60 are different from an 80-year-old. We ensure that our relationship managers understand that and are trained accordingly to pick up the non-verbal cues of the parent under their care."

## THE ROAD AHEAD

By the end of 2016, Tribeca Care plans to expand its base to metros including Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore. Highlighting that they are an organisation and not a kitchen operation, Dutta says, "We are not doing it only to sell it. We partners are trying to bring to the table our experience and expertise through this sound business model. Also, because all of us genuinely believe that there needs to be a system that offers emotional and psychological support besides medical facilities to parents who are old and dependent." Question her on one suggestion she would like to give those with old parents at home, and she says, parents are not going to be there forever, so make that call right now which you may have been postponing.



iPad 09:41



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# “Indian women must chart their own path”

EMPLOYMENT ALONE DOES NOT AFFORD WOMEN PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE. OWNERSHIP OF LAND DOES, SAYS ECONOMIST BINA AGARWAL

PHOTOGRAPH BY M ZHAZO

**T**he quiet but monumental work, *Gender Challenges* in three volumes created a buzz in the Capital last month, but the former director of The Institute of Economic Growth, prefers to fly under the radar. The economist, who has made gender her life's work, has powered a new discourse on violence against women in India and was largely responsible for the passing of the Hindu Succession Amendment Act in 2005. Here is Bina Agarwal, on a break from the University of Manchester, UK, where she is professor of development economics and environment, talking to India Today *Editor-at-Large* KAVEREE BAMZAI on the issues that excite her.

**In your 1994 book, *A Field of One's Own*, you argue that the gender gap in command over property, especially**



**PAGES** 1,360  
**PRICE** ₹3,995

**OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**



Economist Bina Agarwal



**land, is the most important economic factor affecting women's situation, but few women own or control it. Has male migration to cities affected this?**

Since I wrote my land rights book the situation has improved substantially in law but little in practice. Due to the Hindu Succession Amendment Act (HSAA) in 2005, and the earlier legal reforms among Christians and Parsis, most Indian women (except Muslim and tribal women) today enjoy the same rights of inheritance as men. In practice, however, few women own immovable property, especially agricultural land. So when men migrate to cities, women are left to manage the farms, but are not recognised as farmers. They usually lack titles to the land they cultivate, and are largely ignored by institutions that provide credit, irrigation, technical information, and inputs. This adversely affects not only their family income and ability to escape poverty, it also reduces our country's agricultural growth. Without recognising women's crucial role in agriculture today and providing them independent access to land and inputs, we cannot tackle rural distress or achieve the economic growth rates we desire.

Also, command over immovable property can enhance not only women's economic welfare but also their children's well-being, as well as women's social and political status and bargaining power in the

family and community. Although reservation in panchayat raj institutions has greatly increased women's presence in local decision-making, it has done little to empower them economically.

**Your work demonstrates that even employed women can face domestic violence if husbands react negatively to their wives appearing "superior" to them. How do we change that mindset?**

Social attitudes take time to change. But we also need to focus on the right factor. I co-authored a study of ever-married women in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala and found that if women own a house or land, it protects them from domestic violence. While 49 per cent of the propertyless women had faced beatings from spouses, the figures were 18 per cent, 10 per cent and 7 per cent for women who respectively owned land, a house, or both. Even where only the woman was propertied and her husband was propertyless it deterred violence. Employment alone (except in the formal sector) did not provide the same protection.

**You say there is a disproportionate negative impact on women of environmental degradation and a significant positive impact from their participating in forest governance. Can you elaborate?**

In rural India, women bear the main responsibility for fetching firewood, fodder and water. Firewood which is

the single most important cooking fuel not just in poor households but also in well-off ones, is still almost entirely gathered by women from local forests and villages. Hence when forests and the commons degrade, or when water tables fall and drinking water wells dry up, the burden falls mainly on women. It is they who have to walk longer and farther. Yet typically they have little say in the management of these resources, even when they are often in the forefront of environmental movements.

After writing extensively on women's exclusion from community forest management, I decided to reverse the question and ask: what if women were included? What difference would that make? Almost none had addressed this question. So I collected my own data on the functioning of community forestry groups (CFGs) with varying gender compositions in India and Nepal, and tested if firewood shortages declined and forest condition improved more in villages which had more women in CFGs, after controlling for many other factors.

My results supported both those hypotheses. But women presence had to reach a critical mass. Where does this critical mass lie? Often people cite one-third as the magic figure without testing for it. I was skeptical of this figure, but on testing I found that women were indeed more effective if they constituted 25-33 per cent of the CFG management.

**What connections does the Indian women's movement need to build today with the global women's movement?**

The Indian women's movement must chart its own path, relevant to our needs. Globally, women's movements have focused overwhelmingly on violence against women, and we in India, have largely done the same. Undeniably violence is a key issue, but it is also linked with women's economic situation. We have neglected this link and women's economic empowerment more generally. For instance, in 2005, India passed both the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (DVA) and the HSAA. But women's groups, barring a few, focused on the DVA, neglecting both the implementation of the HSAA and the synergy between the two Acts.

With the HSAA, for example, even married daughters are recognised as coparceners in joint family property and have the legal right to reside in and even ask for partition of the parental dwelling house. This can provide Hindu women who want to escape domestic violence a much-needed shelter.

In addition, coparcenary rights are rights by birth which cannot be willed away by fathers and are therefore protected from male-biased attitudes. These key features of the HSAA can be used both to strengthen women's livelihoods and protect them from violence in ways that the DVA alone cannot.

# ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

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A cap, backpack and the trendy parka together make a cool statement. Team it with jeans or leggings.

**Kappa at Lifestyle** top ₹699

**Kanelle by Kanika Jain** pants ₹4,700

**H&M** parka ₹5,999

**Superdry** cap ₹1,990

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**Accessorize** necklace ₹1,345





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**Accessorize bag** ₹3,145

**Dior earrings** Price on request

**Vogue sunglasses** ₹4,990

**Photographs** M Zhazo

**Styling** Gul Garg

**Make-up** Sohni Juneja

**Hair styling** Manika Rai

**Model** Yulia at Brave Models

**Text & coordination** Saurav Bhanot

**Location courtesy** Hotel Pullman, Aerocity, New Delhi



Romantic at heart  
Monica Dogra





# “I’AM ALWAYS IN LOVE”

SINGER AND POET MONICA DOGRA TALKS ON BEING A DIE-HARD ROMANTIC

By MOEENA HALIM

She’s the poet in the electro-alternative band *Shaa’ir + Func*, the debutante in Kiran Rao’s *Dhobi Ghat*, and the sincere if slightly philosophical judge, on *The Stage*, a televised talent hunt for the country’s best singers in English. And now, after having spent close to a decade in the industry, Monica Dogra has finally launched her first solo album titled *Spit: untie your tongue and spit your lovin’ out*. The poet in her has never left the songstress, who is constantly looking for romance in the mundane. Sentimental about her first love, she is still reminded of her high school boyfriend every time she gets a whiff of the Issey Miyake perfume he used to wear. After all, she’d even written a poem about it.

**Do you consider yourself to be a romantic?**

Yes, I am a die-hard romantic; romance is my life. On a Sunday, even if I’m alone at home, I’ll burn some incense, put on some music and enjoy the day. I’m always searching for those moments and attempting to make them sensual and expressive through my poetry.

**What does love mean to you?**

Love, for me, means being unconditional, accepting someone for who they are and not expecting them to change for you. It’s also about being the best friend you could possibly be.

**Your idea of an ideal date**

I’d like to go bowling and then grab a pizza with someone who has his nose pierced. I know that’s pretty specific, but I guess I just know what I like.

**Your first heartbreak? How did you get over it?**

That was my college boyfriend. I’m not telling you his name. We’re not really friends anymore. I decided love wasn’t for me after that. It sort of fell from grace for me at that time. When you’re young, you idealise love and

often that’s why you break-up, because it doesn’t live up to your expectations. You realise that love is inconvenient, and it is unpredictable.

**Tell us about your first love?**

It was my first boyfriend. We were both in high school when we started seeing each other. His name was Shantanu Narayan and our parents were friends. We actually dated for a while; three years.

**Was it the pain of that heartbreak that turned you into a poet?**

Well, I’ve been a poet ever since I could write. But yes, the pain of that break-up helped me write a lot.

**Are you in love at the moment?**

I’m always in love. But really,

so many people who saw me on *The Stage* told me that I was flirting with everyone. But that’s just who I am. I do fall in love with everyone around me.

**How do you know it’s love?**

I feel love in everything. It can’t be quantified. Love could be what you feel for your family, your friends; even hate is love. I’m getting a bit philosophical, but again, that’s just me. It’s true though; I really think love is the source of everything, even the most unlikely of things such as hate. Either it’s love that’s the source of the lack thereof.

**Do you enjoy celebrating Valentine’s Day?**

Not really. I think it means a lot to a lot of people and that’s beautiful. But I like to think that love extends beyond that one day. Besides, I’m mostly travelling during Valentine’s Day and I don’t really celebrate it. It’s usually that way on New Year’s Eve and my birthday too. So, I guess none of these days are particularly special. This year too, I’m working on Valentine’s Day. I’ll be performing in Bangalore, which means it’s going to be day full of love anyway.

## CRAZY ABOUT LOVE

**Your favourite romantic films?**

I love romantic comedies and I always have. I guess it’s pretty common for most emotional women to enjoy rom-coms. It isn’t really a comedy, but *The Notebook* is my absolute favourite. I also love *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. I like the silly ones too, like *Ten Things I Hate About You* and *Pretty Woman*.

**Your favourite love songs?**

‘Howling’ by Ame and Dixon and ‘Water runs dry’ by Boyz II Men.

## Fitness for women with sedentary jobs

### What are the ill-effects of sitting for long hours at work?

NEHA DHINGRA, DELHI

Several studies have shown that prolonged periods of sitting put an individual at an increased risk of developing serious medical conditions like heart diseases, diabetes, and even some types of cancer. Maintaining a sedentary position for hours on end keeps the body too relaxed, which does not allow muscles to get proper use. As the body slows down while in a resting and seated position, the metabolism naturally slows down too. Calories are burned at a far lower rate when most of the muscles are not in use making those women prone to obesity.

### What are some precautions to take while sitting at your desk?

PRIYAM CHATURVEDI, BANGALORE

It's important that your chair be at the proper height to reduce strain on your neck and back. Adjust the height of your chair so that you are at a 90-90 position with feet flat on the floor. Keep your lower spine flat against the back and do not hunch forward.

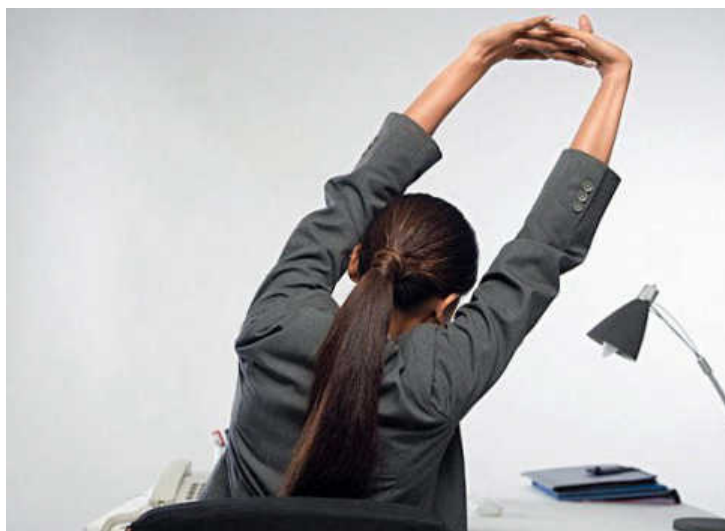


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### Are there any specific stretches for working women?

PIYAL BANERJEE, MUMBAI

Try the neck stretch; touch your ear to your shoulder and hold it there. For a chest opener, stretch your arms back as if you were trying to grab a pencil between your shoulder blades. For lower-body strength, sitting in your chair, extend one leg out straight in front of you. Hold for two seconds. Then raise it up as high as you can, and hold it again for two seconds. Repeat with each leg 15 times. Stand at your desk, and, arms straight, place your palms on the desk with your fingers pointed towards you. Lower your body slowly until you feel the stretch. Hold for 15 seconds. Another good stretch is the Magic Carpet Ride—sit on the chair with your legs crossed and your feet on the seat. Then place your hands on the armrests, suck in your gut and raise yourself a few inches above the seat, using your belly muscles and hands. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds and rest for 30 seconds. Repeat this five times.

### How helpful are desk exercises for women?

ANUSHKA BISHEN, DELHI

Any kind of exercise in any amount is always beneficial. Desk exercises, especially stretching is important, easy-to-do and extremely effective in diminishing back pain. The results are cumulative and depend on the consistency of course.



Dr Milind Patil,  
Orthopaedic and Joint Replacement Surgeon,  
Revival Bone & Joint Hospital, Mumbai



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# “BAD DATES GET ERASED FROM MY MEMORY”

By SUHANI SINGH



**I**ndian housewives may already be familiar with Pakistani actor Mawra Hocane whose shows have appeared on Zindagi TV channel. But the 23-year-old first drew plenty of “Who’s that girl?” questions when actor Ranbir Kapoor shot a video wishing her the best. Looks like the wishes worked with Hocane making her Bollywood debut with *Sanam Teri Kasam*.

## CHILDHOOD AMBITION

To work in Bollywood

## PROUDEST MOMENT

When my directors, Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru, said they were proud of me

## WILDEST DREAM

Winning all best debutant awards this year

## FONDEST MEMORY

Every memory with my parents has been a fond memory for me

## WORST DATE

I don’t remember those bad dates; they get automatically erased from my memory.

## BIGGEST WEAKNESS

My compassionate nature; it’s both a boon and a bane

## DREAM ROLE

*Umrao Jaan*

## QUALITIES YOU MOST DESPISE IN A MAN

Insensitivity towards women

## ONE HOLLYWOOD ACTOR YOU’D LIKE AS YOUR CO-STAR

Ryan Gosling

## LAST BOOK YOU READ

*The Forty Rules of Love* by Elif Safak, Turkish author. The best book ever.

## A MOVIE YOU SAW BECAUSE EVERYONE WAS TALKING ABOUT IT

*The Fault in Our Stars*

## GUILT-PLEASURE VIEWING

*Bigg Boss*

## FAVOURITE HOTSPOT

Pali Village Café in Bandra, Mumbai

## BIGGEST STRENGTH

Patience

## WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE STUCK IN A LIFT WITH?

Harsh (co-star Harshvardhan Rane in *Sanam Teri Kasam*)

## IF YOU COULD TAKE ONE THING FROM INDIA TO PAKISTAN AND VICE VERSA

I would take *Sanam Teri Kasam* to Pakistan and get my sister, Uraw, to India

## IF YOU COULD BE A FLY ON THE WALL OF ANY ACTOR’S HOME

Ranbir Kapoor. I am a very talkative person and the mere mention of him makes me giggle, smile, blush, all emotions put together. I get tongue-tied. And that’s rare. I want to meet him one day.



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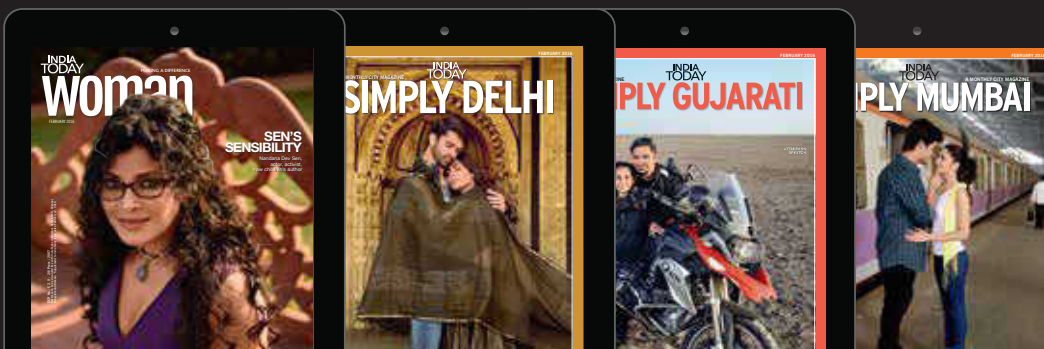
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INDIA  
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LITTLE RANN  
OF KUTCH

## DATE NIGHT

FUN WAYS TO CELEBRATE  
THE SEASON OF LOVE





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## COVER STORY

Romance is in the air **s-4**  
Here's how you can spend the season  
of love in the state.

## CITY BUZZ

Into the City **s-11**  
Seven things you  
can't miss.

Cover photo by DANESH JASSAWALA

# OUR PICK of the month

## Revival of the 1970s

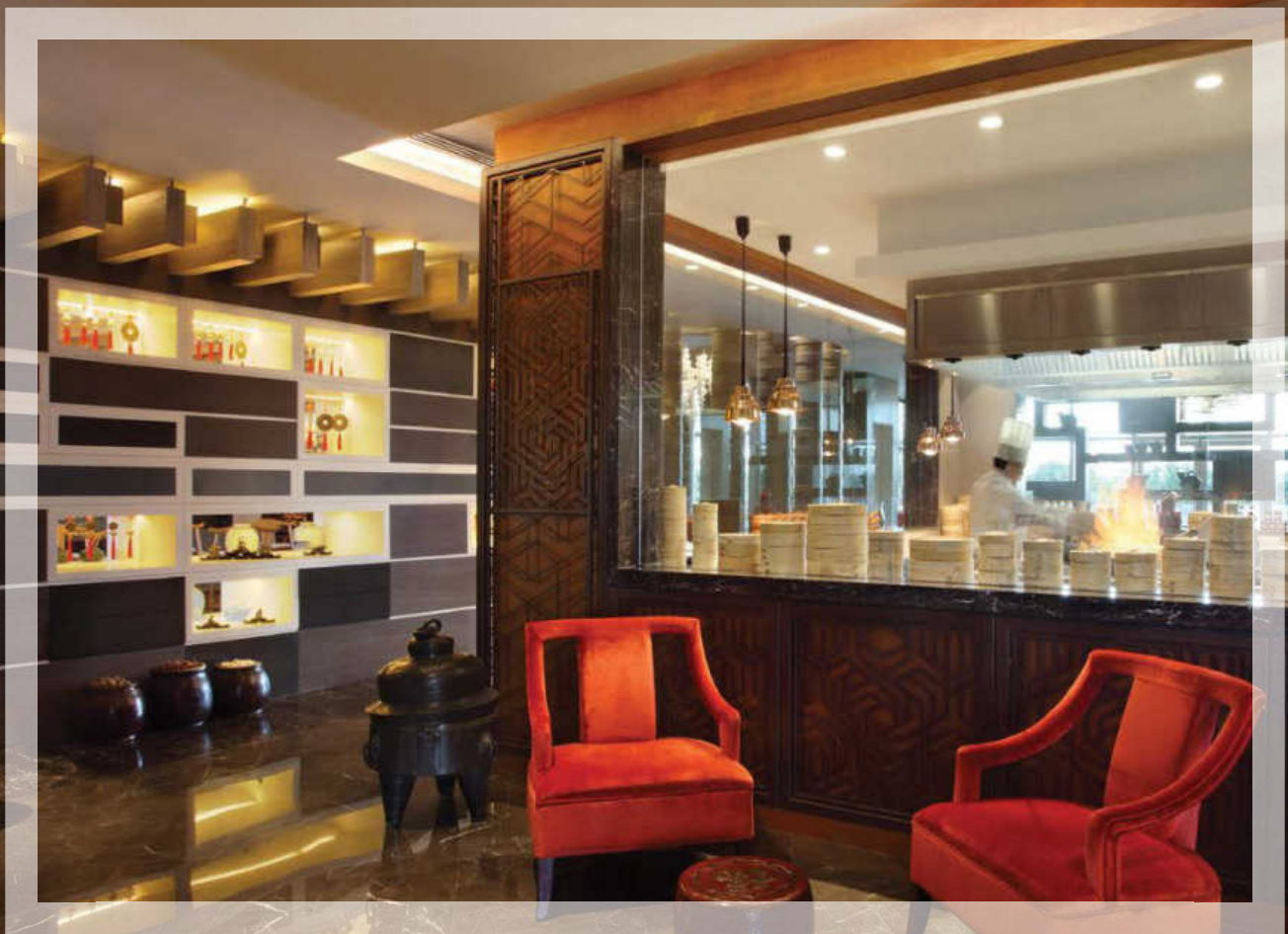
**February 21**

The Rainbow Cultural Club of Ahmedabad will take you on a nostalgic journey through the golden years of Bollywood with their tribute to the eternal star of Hindi filmdom, Rajesh Khanna. Singer Chetan Rana will be crooning some of the widely loved hits like *Roop Tera Mastana*, *Mere Sapno ki Rani* and *Ye Jo Mohabbat Hai*. So, prepare to be transported back to the 70s and tap your feet to these classic tunes. At Tagore Memorial Hall, Ahmedabad  
**Timings** 9.00 p.m. onwards  
**Tel** 9376980678



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# ROMANCE IS IN THE AIR

A CANDLELIGHT DINNER BY  
A CANAL, A NIGHT HERITAGE WALK OR  
A QUICK GETAWAY, HERE'S HOW YOU CAN  
SPEND THE SEASON OF LOVE IN THE REGION

By REWATI RAU

## ► TABLE FOR TWO

Dinner at The Waterside

**IF** YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE WHO WANTS A TYPICAL FLOWERS-BALLOONS-AND-candles kind of the setting for your Valentine's Day date, The Waterside restaurant is where you should be heading. Located right next to the Narmada Canal, the sprawling restaurant, with its beautiful alfresco setting is one of the most picturesque places for an evening out in the city. Low wooden chairs and tables set amidst the greens, overlooking the peaceful canal make for a dreamlike setting for your romantic dinner date. Open just for dinner, The Waterside offers a variety of pure vegetarian global cuisine including Mexican, Italian or Thai. Most popular for their sizzlers and pastas, The Waterside has something for every taste preference. Finish off your meal with the delicious sizzling brownie, the perfect end to a great evening.

► **PERSONAL TOUCH** The restaurant will help you plan your own private date with all the fancy paraphernalia. Be it heart-shaped balloons, rose petals strewn all over the floor or a soft romantic song playing in the background, they will happily set it all up. But if you prefer partying with the other love struck couples in the city—sign up for the couples-only party in the restaurant lawns on Valentine's Day.

► **AT** The Waterside, Near Narmada Canal, Adalaj Circle, S.G. Highway, Adalaj

► **PRICE** Rs 1,000 for two. Extra for planning the special table on Valentine's Day.

► **TEL** 07929289398

A Valentine's Day  
table set up at  
The Waterside

## ► INTO THE WILD

Little Rann of Kutch

The salty desert at  
Little Rann of Kutch

**THERE** IS NO BETTER TIME THAN Valentine's Day to escape the city for a little romantic sojourn. If faraway places are not an option, we suggest a spectacular getaway surprisingly close to the city. The Little Rann of Kutch, just 90 km away from Ahmedabad, is the perfect place for a quiet Valentine's Day weekend. Spend a quiet evening in the breathtaking salt desert where you can just sit and stare into the horizon marvelling at the fascinating landscape hearing the sounds of silence. You can spend hours together in solitude with no one else but each other

for company. That done, head for the safari to the Wild Ass Sanctuary, the only place in the world to find the Indian wild ass. Pick up your camera and be ready to click the hordes of pelicans, nilgais and the plenty of birds found here.

- **WHERE TO STAY** Rann Riders, an ethnically designed eco-resort
- **PRICE** Rs 8,000 for a couple per night
- **HOW TO REACH** Little Rann of Kutch is a one-and-a-half hour drive from Ahmedabad
- **CONTACT** Rann Riders, Dasada, Sundranagar
- **TEL** 9925236014





## TIME TRAVEL

### Night Heritage Walk

#### THERE'S

SOMETHING about heritage and old culture

that brings alive tales of nostalgia and makes you relive the bygone era. And the warmth is doubled if you're enjoying it with your partner. If this sounds like your idea of fun, then enroll for the night heritage walk conducted by the House of MG. The evening commences at the majestic heritage hotel House of MG, where the guests gather for the walk. From here, a shuttle takes you to the Mangaldas ni Haveli, a 200-year-old house in the Old City. For a while, transport yourself with your partner to the golden era as you look at the finest examples of ancient carved wooden architecture. Walk past the narrow winding lanes of the city where some of the ancient architectural structures have been beautifully kept alive. The walk culminates with a visit to Raja no Haziro, where the sixth-generation of a family continues the tradition of drumming to signal the closing of city gates at 11 p.m. every night.

#### ► GASTRONOMIC DELIGHT

Celebrate your togetherness with a chocolate pizza as your walk ends at Manek Chowk, the old city's food haven. The crowded food court has pocket-friendly treats for every taste bud—what better way to end a beautiful evening.

#### ► COST Rs 286 for the walk

#### ► TIMING 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.

#### ► CONTACT 07922140416







A couple's baking class at Manju's The Art of Cooking

## BAKED WITH LOVE

Couple baking classes

**GIVE**

**THE HEART-SHAPED CAKE**  
a miss this Valentine's Day and instead enroll for a baking class together and come back equipped with skills to create some beautiful sweet somethings for special occasions. Rekindle your romance as you unravel secrets behind fascinating cakes and pastries you love relishing together.

Giggle over spilled batter, sneak eat some strawberries, whip eggs together and finally marvel at the beauty you've created. And who knows, one of you might just end up becoming a pastry chef.

► **WHERE** Chef Pradip Dey runs a cosy little

baking studio right in the centre of the city where he teaches all the nuances behind baking designer cakes, breads and desserts. This month, he's taking special couple batches where he'll take a couple through the basics of cake baking and decorating. "It is a lifetime experience for a couple to learn the art of baking together," says Chef Dey. And guess what, you even get to take the cake you made home.

► **AT** Manju's The Art of Cooking, Shree Krishna Centre, Mithakhali, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad

► **PRICE** Rs 15,500 for a five-day course

► **TEL** 07940304399



## ► SAIL IN LOVE

Boating at Kankaria Lake

## SOMETIMES

from the hustle and bustle of life in a quiet space with just each other for company. And what's better than a boat ride to enjoy this time off? While the city boasts of quite a few waterfronts, Kankaria Lake is the best place to plan your little boat date.

One of the most sought-after picnic spots in the city, this is where you can spend a relaxed evening cruising slowly on the calm waters.

ALL YOU need is a few hours away

To make things memorable, you could perhaps plan a little surprise for your special someone while on the boat. So the flowers, chocolates and gifts could be popped up right in the middle of the lake. Once the boat ride is over, take a walk down the beautiful promenade surrounding the lake and enjoy the breeze as the dusk falls.

► **DON'T MISS** While at Kankaria Lake, don't miss the light and water show and take a ride in the newly-launched toy train.

► **AT** Kankaria Lake

A couple boating at the Kankaria Lake







## ▶ TWO TO TANGO

Learn Dancing

Salsa social at  
Dugout Cafe

**SKIP** THE MOVIE THEATRES THIS TIME and opt for a dance class instead. After all, an adrenaline-filled evening can do wonders to your bonding. It's all about syncing your steps, poses and expressions together as you discover more about each other through the journey.

This Valentines, Jayvir Mehta of Furor Ahmedabad is offering short-and-sweet evening and weekend "bootcamp" dance classes in Ahmedabad. The unique Bootcamp Social Dance Series enables anyone to learn Latin

dances like Bachata in only a few hours. Learn to twirl with a partner in popular styles such as upbeat Salsa and Jive, or slower romantic styles such as Bachata. "In this two-hour class, we'll take the couple through basics of Bachata dance, which is a very slow, soft dance form, ideal for a couple. More than learning the dance, our focus will be on couples enjoying this activity together," says 33-year-old Mehta.

▶ **PRICE** Starts at Rs 2,000

▶ **AT** Venue to be finalised

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Photograph by DANESH JASSAWALA

# 7 THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

1 CAFE REVIEW / BAAP NO BAGICHO

## THE QUIRKY PLATTER

The inviting riot of colours outside the doors of the newly-launched Baap No Bagicho in the city immediately set the mood for a funky dine-out experience. Step in and discover a world of quirk—bright blue, orange and yellow buckets turned into stools, a tree with earphones hanging from its branches, charpoy for people to sit or even lie down. Owner Keyur Brahmbhatt, 28, started the cafe with the sole intention of giving Amdavadis a space to hang out. “It’s just been 10 days and we see a steady crowd coming over, spending four or five hours just sitting and chatting here,” he says. With a menu limited to just about five snacks

Baap no Bagicho has a world of quirk

and tea and coffee, the cafe’s USP is its funky ambience designed by Brahmbhatt’s fiancée, Priyanka Bhrahmbhatt, 28. That the restaurant is located not bang in the middle of the city but the outskirts at Vastrapur make it an attractive option for a stop over after a long drive. While Bhrahmbhatt is happy with the limited menu, the chef churns out some delicious snacks. There’s Bihar’s famous *litti chowkha*, Kolkata’s *jhal muri*, Nepalese *sel roti* with pickle and

Gujarat’s innovative Bajari no Pizza (pizza toppings on a base of pearl millet flour). Wash these down with a *kulhad ki chai* from the inhouse *chai thela* in the cafe. Baap no Bagicho will also soon be housing some delicious baked snacks from the city’s old and famous bakeries.

**MEAL FOR TWO** Rs 150 plus taxes

AT Road No 12, Banjara Hills TEL 33165008

■ By Rewati Rau





## 2 CHEAP THRILLS

February 26 to 28

This pop-up flea market is the chance for Amdavadis to get their hands on affordable clothes and scrumptuous street food. Go on a shopping extravaganza or opt for a variety of activities that are on offer. With arts and crafts aisle for children, a stand-up comedy and music stage, the flea market promises to be a fun outing for young and old alike. For those who want a fitness checkup, there is also a health and fitness camp at the market that will exclusively focus on women. There is also a photobooth for those who love to save a memory.

**AT** S.G. Highway, Ahmedabad  
**TEL** 8347677767, 9725487565



## 4 LAUGHTER REMEDY

### UNDHIYU DOS TRES-COMEDY SHOW

March 6

Let the sultans of comedy—Kanan Gill and Biswa Kalyan Rath take you on an evening filled with humour and laughter.

**TICKETS** RS 400 onwards

**AT** Sir Sayajinagar Gruh, Akota, Shankheshwar Parshwanath Marg, Vadodara **DETAILS** [insider.in](http://insider.in)

## 3 STAR GAZING

February 19

Bollywood's super star, Salman Khan will mesmerise the people of Surat with dance performances on his hit songs from *Dabang*, *Kick* and *Jai Ho*.

**Tickets** Rs 799 onwards

**At** Bh. Agrawal School, Canal - VIP Road, Vesu, Surat

**Details** [bookmyshow.com](http://bookmyshow.com)







## 5 ON A FITNESS TRAIL

**February 21**

The Sugar Free Cyclothon 2016 will see passionate cyclists take to the streets of Ahmedabad for a marathon that will include a 100 kms and a 50 kms track, a fashion ride for those who want to flaunt a

sartorial look on their bikes and a children's ride that educates children on traffic dos and don'ts.

**TIMINGS** 5.00 a.m. onwards

**AT** Sabarmati Riverfront, Ashram Road, Ahmedabad

Photograph by FAWZAN HUSAIN



## 6 PAWSOME FUN

**February 14**

The Socialwag Dogathon is a marathon where canine lovers and pet-owners come together for a walk in the city with their furry friends. The proceeds from the event will go into providing care for abandoned and unwanted dogs in the city. Other events at the Dogathon will include training sessions, a fashion show for dogs and a pet adoption zone.

**REGISTRATION** Rs 200 onwards **TIMING** 5.50 a.m.  
**AT** GMDC ground, Ahmedabad **DETAILS** [socialwag.com](http://socialwag.com)

## 7 RHYTHM KING

**February 28**

Ahmedabad will get the chance to witness India's favourite rapper, Badshah live-in concert. Joining him will be KnoX Artist from Dubai who will collaborate with the rap star on stage.

**AT** Shanku's Farm, Gota Circle, Near Nirma University, S.G. Highway, Ahmedabad

**DETAILS** [bookmyshow.com](http://bookmyshow.com)



Photograph by RAJWANT RAWAT





## WEAVING WONDERS

SHAHIDHUSAIN ANSARI USES HIS EMBROIDERY SKILLS TO WEAVE ICONIC MONUMENTS OF THE WORLD ON CLOTH

By ANURITA RATHORE

While gold, silver and silk threads in embroidery are largely associated with dresses for women, even traditional outfits for men. But Shahidhusain Ansari has just completed recreating historical monuments from India and across the globe on a 24x36 inch cloth, using these very threads. From the Great Wall of China,

Leaning Tower of Pisa, Eiffel Tower in Paris to India's Rashtrapati Bhavan, Red Fort, Taj Mahal, Golden Temple and Gateway of India, Shahidhusain has embroidered them all. This collection, his "undisclosed surprise", will be the second exhibition after the first one held in 2014 during Heritage Week celebrations in Ahmedabad where Shahidhusain put up a collection of city monuments.

Some time in 1987, at an age

Shahidhusain Ansari with his creations

when boys around him were playing *gilli danda* (tipcat) or *kabaddi* in the lanes of Radhanpur in Patan, a town famous for its *aari* embroidery, 10-year-old Shahidhusain picked up the gold thread and needle to learn and make beautiful creations.

While this embroidery art has helped several homes flourish in Radhanpur, owing to its womenfolk working endless hours with gold and silver threads, Shahidhusain was the only one in his family of seven to pick the thread and learn to make traditional motifs.

His label, Hunar Art & Craft, made bridal dresses for designer houses and boutiques until 10 years ago but then machine embroidery started replacing handwork. Shahidhusain "fought it out for about five years, struggling to keep business afloat", before finally shutting shop in Juhapura that included a staff of 20 craftsmen. "I did feel down and out but didn't let the feeling take a grip over me. I closely observed and met artisans from different states, studied various kinds of embroidery before finally returning to work on my heritage collection," he says.

Shahidhusain wants to show artisans how "there's a lot one can do within the work tradition if creativity is fanned". Besides putting together his latest collection, the 39-year-old keeps busy with workshops including those at National Institute of Design, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Ahmedabad and National Institute of Crafts & Design, Jaipur. His collections have been showcased across cities and displayed at Delhi's Dilli Haat, Mumbai's Jehangir Art Gallery, Junagadh Museum, among others.

After city monuments and then the latest one on world monuments, one wonders what Ansari's third collection will be. "Something to do with history...", he leaves you guessing.

Photograph by SACHIN BHATT



INDIA  
TODAY

A MONTHLY CITY MAGAZINE

# SIMPLY MUMBAI

REVISITING SLUMDOG  
MILLIONAIRE'S FINALE  
SCENE AT CST STATION

## LOVE, BOMBAY

RECREATING BOLLYWOOD'S ROMANCE WITH THE CITY



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Photograph by MANDAR DEODHAR

## COVER STORY

**The Love Project**  
Here's a look at how Bollywood  
adds a rose-tinted romance

**s-4**

to Mumbai's iconic locations.

## CITY BUZZ

**Into the City**  
Four events you can't miss.

**s-13**

Cover photo by MANDAR DEODHAR

# OUR PICK of the month

## Weekend cheer Every Saturday and Sunday

A bustling business district during the week, Ballard Estate is going to turn into a cultural hub every weekend until May 2016. Launched by city group Band of Boys in January, the Ballard Estate Festival will include a gourmet spread, art exhibitions, heritage walks, flea markets apart from an interesting range of musical performances. Veteran band Indus Creed will perform live on February 13 and the young and upcoming Prateek Kuhad on February 14. The following weekend's line-up includes Filter Coffee, Shair n Funk and TVF. **When** every Saturday and Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. **Tickets** Rs 150 to Rs 300 **Website** *insider.in*



**Want to tell us about an event? A new store? A restaurant? People doing interesting things? Anything newsworthy? Please email us at: [simplymumbai@intoday.com](mailto:simplymumbai@intoday.com)**





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# THE LOVE PR

HERE'S A LOOK AT HOW BOLLYWOOD ADDS A ROSE-TINTED ROMANCE TO THE CITY'S ICO

Photographs by MANDAR DEODHAR





# OBJECT

NIC LOCATIONS

By MOEENA HALIM

**M**UMBAI HAS OFTEN BEEN DESCRIBED AS the place you either love, hate or love to hate and the cinematic portrayal of the city has mirrored this notion. If New York has a specific identity in Hollywood, it is Mumbai that offers the alternative in Hindi films. "It is at once the city of dreams as well as the corrupt, dark Gotham city that births gangsters," observes Nasreen Munni Kabir, a documentary filmmaker and film writer.

Different genres of cinema have looked at different aspects of the city. "There was *Gaman* (1978), where Farooq Shaikh played a taxi driver and the poignant question 'Seene mein jalan, aankhon mein toofan sa kyon hai? Is sheher mein har shaqs pareshaan sa kyon hai?' remains. Then there was *Satya* (1998), which turned Mumbai inside out and showed us its sleazy side, onion-smelling bars and slippery-with-body-fluids rooms. There was Rohan Sippy's *Bluffmaster!* (2005), which rephrased the city, looking for forgotten beauty. And there were those neglected films—*Chhoti Si baat* (1975), *Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro* (1983) and *Gharonda* (1977)," remembers Jerry Pinto, author, poet and journalist.

According to Rachel Dwyer, Professor of Indian Cultures and Cinema at SOAS, University of London, it is director Raj Khosla who best depicts the grimy side of the city in his noir films. His 1956 film *CID*, she says, is

## SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE • 2008

Location **CST (formerly VT) Station**



If it is Dharavi where Jamal is the so-called 'slumdog', it is Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus where he redeems his hero status, reunited with the love of his life Latika (Freida Pinto). This is where *Jai Ho*, which plays along with the end credits, was choreographed with a troupe of 100 dancers in true-blue Bollywood style.

## World's Slimmest DNS Metal Shoe Rack

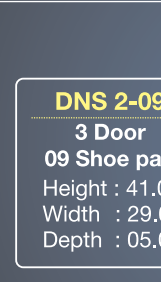


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WARRANTY**



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Depth : 05.0"



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09 Shoe pair**  
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Width : 29.0"  
Depth : 05.0"

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## JAANE TU... YA JAANE NA • 2008

Location **Bandra Fort**

Bandra Fort is where *Jai* (Imran Khan) knows he can find his best friend *Aditi* (Genelia D'Souza) every time she's feeling blue. The film's most popular song '*Kabhi Kabhi Aditi*' is filmed here, while *Jai* tries to cheer her up after she loses her kitten.

a wonderful example with images of Worli Seaface in '*Le ke pehla pehla pyar*', the streets of '*Ye hai Mumbai meri jaan*' and the rain-soaked urban night scenes. "Offbeat films are adventurous. Kiran Rao's *Dhobi Ghat* (2011), used wonderful locations, for example. It's also a pleasure to see the city in older films, such as Marine Drive in *Anmol Ghadi* (1946) or *Muqaddar Ka Sikandar* (1978). *Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi* (1958) has some great shots of the city as do many of Guru Dutt's films, including *Mr. & Mrs. '55* (1955)," says Dwyer.

The cinematic lens gets a rose-tinted hue when romance is the genre in question. The Mumbai rain allows for the perfect setting to showcase love and longing, notes Dwyer, who has written an essay on '*Rimjhim gire saawan*' one of her favourite songs shot in the city, "when Moushumi and Amitabh run about the rain, 'owning the city'."

Quite often, iconic spots become characters in themselves. Danny Boyle's ode to the city and its underdog hero, *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008) has the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST) play the role of the matchmaker. That's where Jamal (Dev Patel) finally reunites with his long-lost love Latika (Freida Pinto). But Jerry Pinto sees this image of the CST station as the "Mumbai-as-mnemonic" filmmakers often employ. "Mumbai has been under-utilised, either because of the bureaucratic difficulties or because of the laziness of filmmakers.

Why isn't Banganga used more often? Or the lovely art deco precincts around Shivaji Park?" he questions.

In Shaad Ali's *Saathiya* (2002) (a remake of Mani Ratnam's Tamil film, *Alaipayuthey*), which explores a new form of marriage of a couple living together as equals and discovering themselves in the process, it is the local train, the lifeline of Mumbai city, that plays a crucial role. "The train journey creates a dimension to their quest, as the couple moves around on the local trains, finding themselves through loving and forgiving," points out Dwyer, who admits to having a personal fondness for the film. "I introduced Shaad to Yash Chopra and went to the screening of Mani Ratnam's film after which Shaad joined YRF," she exclaims.

Another Mani Ratnam film, *Bombay* (1995), depicts the broad-mindedness of Mumbai pre-1992. It is in *Bombay* that Shekhar (Arvind Swamy) and Shaila Banoo (Manisha Koirala) are able to marry and start a family, away from their conservative families in Tamil Nadu. Whether it is the image of them running down the steps of Town Hall after their registered marriage or clowning around with their twin boys at the Gateway of India, Mumbai before the riots is a friend of this multi-cultural family.

Here Simply Mumbai pays ode to the romantic portrayals of the city in films that showcased some of the most recognisable spots of Mumbai.





## WAKE UP SID • 2009

Location **Nariman Point**

Sid's (Ranbir Kapoor) realisation of his love for Aisha (Konkona Sen Sharma) comes just in time with the first rain in Mumbai. The city soaked in a shower of romance is best enjoyed at Nariman Point, and even the new girl in the city knows that.



## SAATHIYA • 2002

Location **The Local Train**

Having met each other briefly at a friend's wedding, Aditya (Vivek Oberoi) chooses the local train to propose marriage to Suhani (Rani Mukherjee). A remake of Mani Ratnam's *Alaipayuthey*, the original was shot in the trains of Chennai.





**BOMBAY • 1995**Location **Gateway of India**

Clearly the most recognisable symbol of the city, the film's poster has the couple pose against the backdrop of the Gateway of India. In the film, it features prominently as the spot the happy couple brings their twin boys to before the city begins to burn.

Model (male) KHUSHANT TANEJA  
Model (female) KRUSHNA PATIL  
Styling SONALI SINGH  
Makeup and hair SUBHASH SINGH  
Model coordinator TUSHAR THAKKAR



# PLANT TO PLATE

CHEFS AND RESTAURATEURS IN THE CITY ARE TAKING TO GROWING HERBS AND VEGETABLES THEY USE AT THEIR EATERIES

By MOEENA HALIM

In September last year, The New York Times announced that Chef Rene Redzepi, whose Copenhagen restaurant Noma is widely regarded as one of the best in the world, was going to shut shop after one final service on New Year's Eve. But not permanently. In Redzepi's view the two-Michelin star restaurant could last another century, but evolution was essential. His plan for the future involves reopening the restaurant in 2017 with an urban farm on the roof where he will grow the produce he what serves. Always partial to a foraged menu, his team would have to head to the rooftop farm to decide the day's specials.

Serving "fresh, seasonal, local", have been culinary buzzwords across the globe, but the idea of chefs and restaurateurs growing their own produce is what the food world is thinking about now. Not only has the trend been spreading to New York and London but it has also made its way to India.

In Mumbai, restaurant manager Romil Ratra and Chef Paul Kinny have started experimenting with urban farming at Phoenix Market city in Kurla, the mall that houses the restaurant they run, Craft Deli and Bistro. While green hotel properties like the ITC group have been taking advantage of the space available to them and growing their own vegetables, Ratra's idea of fashioning a kind of "living wall" of herbs and greens as well as growing carrots and tomatoes on the premises of their standalone is incredible if not a bit outlandish. With a potted tomato plant growing on the roof and carrots and cabbage in the gardens of the mall complex, the concept is still in the



Chef Atul Kochhar, owner, NRI





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PRESENTS**

**Pre Valentine Bash**

**FEATURING DJ  
NTEK SONAL**

**6TH FEB  
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**FEAT.  
DJ KIRAN**

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**20TH  
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**SUPERSONIC  
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**FEAT.  
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experimental phase at the moment. “Our first lot of tomatoes was eaten up by birds,” rues the accidental farmer, as Ratra calls himself. Worse still, the carrots they planted were pulled out by gardeners hired by the mall believing they were weeds ruining the landscaped gardens. But these are teething troubles that Ratra knows he will overcome, for he has seen some successes already. At the counter inside the eatery, you’ll find rectangular pots of multi-coloured microgreens—the purple amaranth, lush green pea shoots and the white stalked mustard—used often to garnish the food. And the *al fresco* area of the restaurant is home to a vertical herb garden, where basil, fennel, mint and a host of other greens grow. So if there’s an order of Caprese salad, for instance, the kitchen staff

the finest, freshest local produce. Clearly, if the availability of exotic ingredients from Chilean sea bass to truffle mushrooms spelt gourmet, it isn’t necessarily the case anymore. When Chef Atul Kochhar, who’s London restaurant Benares was awarded a Michelin star in 2007, recently launched his BKC restaurant NRI (Not Really Indian), he also announced that he would be working with a horticulturalist to grow the produce they use at the restaurant at a farm in Ganeshpuri, around 80 kms away from the city. Finding it frustrating that they currently have to import ingredients like chilies, Kochhar is looking forward to being able to one day grow everything they need at the five-acre plot. “To grow your own is very gratifying,” says Kochhar, who intends to involve his

and a lot of work. We need to be in constant touch with the team at the farm to make sure our menu is reflective of what is abundant at particular time,” reveals Sanchez. But it allows them control over what they’re serving. “When I get spinach from a vendor at Pali Naka, Dadar or Crawford Market, I find it is usually overgrown, not transported well or stored properly. In transit, the leaves are stacked on top of each other in an open truck in the heat. By the time it reaches our kitchen, the quality of the produce is pretty poor,” says Sanchez. At The Table, they not only control the seeds planted and how the crops are grown and harvested, but also ensure the produce is transported carefully across the sea in the Devidayals’ yacht. Sanchez, “a city kid”, had no exposure to growing vegetables or working on a farm before this. “But all chefs are passionate about produce. And we were lucky to meet Adrienne Thadani. She does some great work teaching lower income families how to grow microgreens on their roof. She has helped us transform the land into a working vibrant farm,” reveals the young chef. Currently, they grow a range of veggies and greens including spinach, radish, salad leaves, microgreens, beets and fruits like mango and avocado too.

Having access to the freshest possible produce and not being able to showcase them well would be quite tragic. At Craft, Chef Kinny and Ratra share the belief that when the produce is fresh, less is more. “We don’t incorporate multiple flavours, we keep the marinades and dressings simple,” says Ratra. The vegetables are never cooked too much, which ensures the flavours remain intact.

A challenge these chefs-turned-farmers might face is an overabundance of a particular produce. While it’s too premature for Ratra and Kochhar to worry about this, Sanchez is currently dealing with a surplus of radish. “Now I’m going to have to create a dish that highlights the radish we’ve got. But it’s not exactly fine dining, is it,” says Sanchez, with a laugh.

## SERVING “FRESH, SEASONAL, LOCAL,” HAVE BEEN CULINARY BUZZWORDS ACROSS THE GLOBE, BUT THE IDEA OF CHEFS AND RESTAURATEURS GROWING THEIR OWN PRODUCE IS WHAT THE FOOD WORLD IS THINKING ABOUT NOW.

heads to the vertical herb garden, plucks some fresh basil and grinds it with the rest of the ingredients to add a dollop of pesto to the plate. “The quality of taste is so much better when we’re serving fresh,” he exclaims. Although he does give credit to his visit to Ryan Clift’s The Tippling Club, Ratra also found inspiration closer to home. “My family and I were travelling from Amritsar to Chandigarh and we stopped by this tiny dhaba. I asked the lady to serve us whatever she could manage to rustle up. She went out into the fields behind the dhaba, plucked out some radish and made us some mouthwatering *mooli ka parathas*. My children weren’t thrilled about being served radish, but we adults could certainly tell the difference in the fresh flavour,” he laughs.

Over the years, several Mumbai restaurants and their chefs have realised the importance of sourcing

team of chefs to work on the farm a day a month. “That would give them huge understanding of what they are cooking and its nature. We are taking the organic route so it will be hugely satisfying for our patrons as well,” he adds. But the process for Kochhar’s team is just beginning. It will be at least another 12 to 18 months before they can use the produce from their five-acre farm. Until then, they must lean on farmers with a similar ethos.

The farm-to-fork philosophy is what Chef Alex Sanchez, originally from San Francisco, has been following at Colaba’s The Table for the past three years. The Devidayals, who run the restaurant, have a farm in Alibaug that grows about 25 per cent of the vegetables Sanchez uses in his kitchen. “There’s really nothing convenient about sourcing the produce from our farm. Financially it makes no sense. It’s not cheaper for us. It takes a lot of physical labour



## 4

THINGS TO LOOK  
FORWARD TO

FEBRUARY 18 TO 20

1 REEL  
POWER

**F**ICCI FLO Film Festival, organised in partnership with the reputed Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, is bringing to the city a range of films on themes of gender sensitivity and equality, women's empowerment, stories of relationships, inspiring role models and economic independence. Curated by programmers

Meenakshi Shedde, India/South Asia Consultant to the Berlin International Film Festival, and Prasad Khatu, formerly with Mumbai Academy of the Moving Image (MAMI), the films are being sourced from across the world. The film festival is an open, ticketed event. Here are six films you must catch at the festival

► **THREADS**  
(2014)

Director Cathy Stevelak  
Country USA-Canada-Bangladesh

This is the story of a Bangladeshi woman who teaches quilt making and kantha, simultaneously helping women find a means of livelihood to overcome poverty and social hardships.

► **28 (2014)**

Director Prasanna Jayakody  
Country Sri Lanka  
Three men transport the unidentified body of a woman, who was raped and murdered. During the journey, one of the men realises it is the body of his estranged wife. It is in her voice that we hear her haunting tale.

► **THE WORLD BEFORE HER**  
(2012)

Director Nisha Pahuja  
Country Canada  
The documentary follows two different groups of women training hard—one in a beauty camp the other boot camp.

► **INVOKING JUSTICE** (2011)

Director Deepa Dhanraj  
Country India  
A group of Muslim women in small town Pudukottai get together to form an all-woman organisation to help each other find justice.

► **DRIVING WITH SELVI** (2015)

Director Elisa Paloschi  
Country Canada  
Married at 14, Selvi (pictured above) finds herself in an abusive marriage. The documentary follows her story after she runs away from her husband's home. She refuses to categorise herself as a victim, preferring to identify herself by the job she does—that of a driver.

► **I AM A GIRL** (2014)

Director Rebecca Barry  
Country Australia  
Documentary filmmaker Rebecca Barry follows the persecution of girls



across six countries including Australia, Cambodia, USA and Iran.

At Films Division Complex, Peddar Road, Mumbai Tickets Rs 300 to 500 Website [floilmfestival.com](http://floilmfestival.com)



Shobu Yarlagadda, one of the speakers at IDF

## 2 DESIGNER DATE

→ FEBRUARY 17

The India Design Forum which is being held in collaboration with "Make in India" Week in Mumbai this year aims to empower craftsmen and young designers to become ambassadors of Indian design globally.

**AT** Make in India Centre at MMRDA Grounds **TIME** 9.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.  
**FEE PRICE** Rs 6,000

## 3 AUTO ART

→ FEBRUARY 22 TO 28

Young artist Pratik Sharma introduces his new concept of automobiles on canvas in his second solo show. His intricate drawings depict stately automobiles that wear their scars and scratches like symbols of honour.

**AT** Jehangir Art Gallery, Kala Ghoda

**CONTACT** pratiksharma.com

## 4 EAT TREAT

Mediterra, a recent addition to Bandra's culinary landscape, attempts to do justice to the Mediterranean cuisine. On the menu you'll find a delicious mix of Spanish and Middle Eastern specialities. **Cost for two** Rs 1,200 **At** Hotel Metro Palace, Opposite Globus Mall, Hill Road, Bandra West



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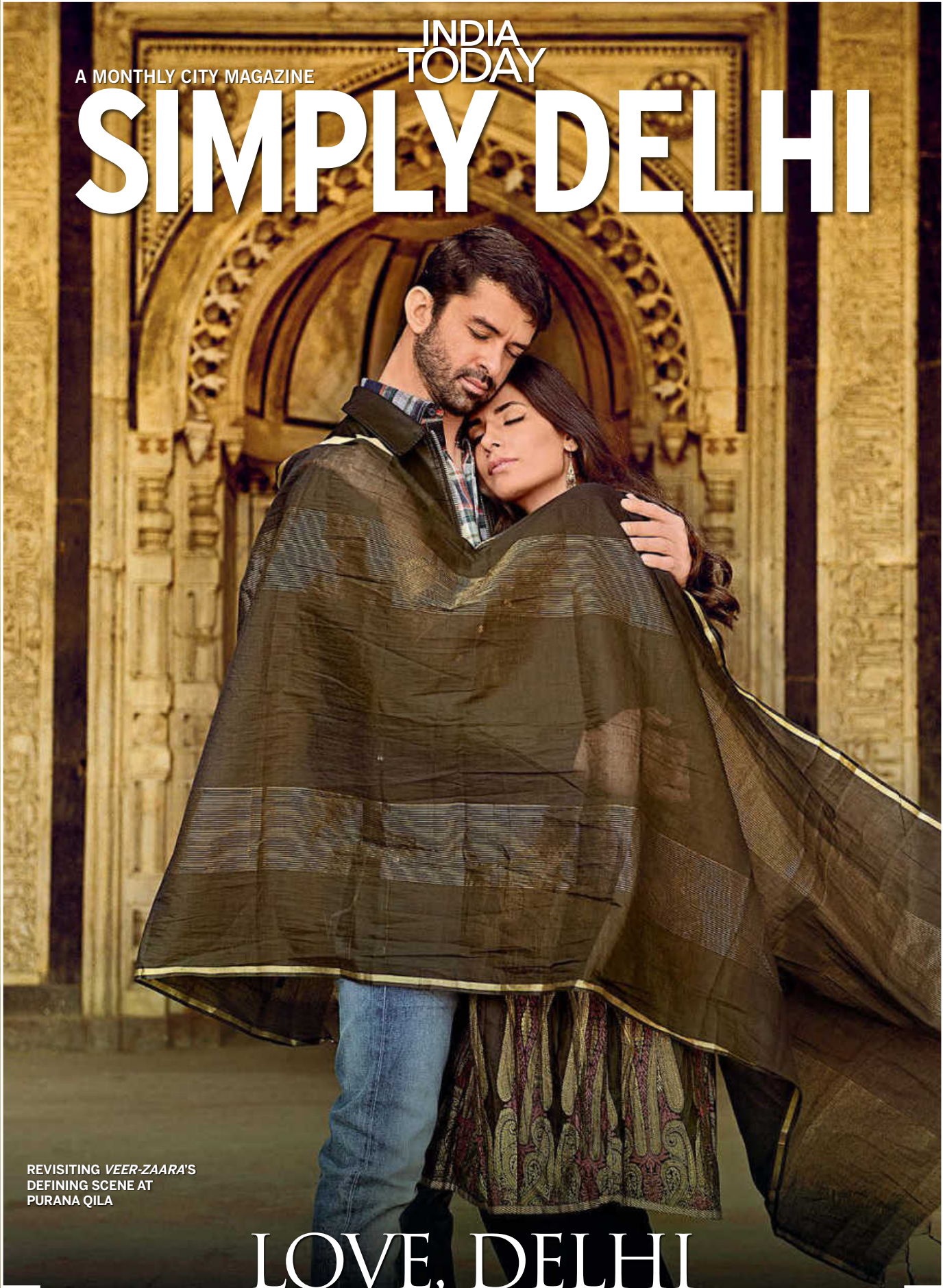




INDIA  
TODAY

A MONTHLY CITY MAGAZINE

# SIMPLY DELHI

A romantic couple is the central focus of the cover. The man, with a beard and dark hair, is wearing a plaid shirt and jeans. The woman, with long dark hair, is wearing a patterned sari. They are both wrapped in a large, dark, textured shawl that has a gold border. They are standing in front of a large, ornate archway made of light-colored stone, which is part of a historic building. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The overall mood is romantic and nostalgic.

REVISITING *VEER-ZAARA*'S  
DEFINING SCENE AT  
PURANA QILA

## LOVE, DELHI

RECREATING BOLLYWOOD'S ROMANCE WITH THE CAPITAL



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Photograph by RAJWANT RAWAT

#### COVER STORY

### The Love Project **s-4**

Any day of the year can be Valentine's Day in these iconic Delhi spots where some of the most heart-warming romantic scenes in film history were filmed.

Cover photo by  
RAJWANT RAWAT

## OUR PICK of the month

### Stage is Set Till February 21

National School of Drama's 18th edition of Bharat Rang Mahotsav, one of the biggest theatre festivals in the world, promises to be a mega event with a showcase of the best of plays by theatre groups from over 10 countries. The festival this year will incorporate seminars on diverse topics such as "Rediscovering the Magic of Theatre", "Today in Today's Theatre" and "Emerging trends in Indian Theatre" by eminent personalities such as Ranjit Kapoor, Mohan Agashe, Ram Gopal Bajaj, Sunil Shanbag and



many more. The performances will be held at Abhimanch and Open Air Theatre at the NSD Campus along with LTG Auditorium, Kamani Auditorium and Shri Ram Centre.

**Tickets Rs 50 to Rs 300**

**Further details [nsdtheatrefest.com](http://nsdtheatrefest.com)**

**Want to tell us about an event? A new store? A restaurant? People doing interesting things? Anything newsworthy? Please email us at: [simplydelhi@intoday.com](mailto:simplydelhi@intoday.com)**





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STREAMLINE





**MALE MODEL WARDROBE**  
Shirt E.T.A AT WESTSIDE Pants WESTSIDE Shoes ZARA Spectacles STYLIST'S OWN

**FEMALE MODEL WARDROBE**  
Kurta WESTSIDE Churidar W Sandals WESTSIDE Dupatta WESTSIDE





# THE LOVE PROJECT

ANY DAY OF THE YEAR CAN BE VALENTINE'S DAY IN THESE ICONIC DELHI SPOTS WHERE SOME OF THE MOST HEART-WARMING ROMANTIC SCENES IN FILM HISTORY WERE FILMED

By KAVYANJALI KAUSHIK, MOHINI MEHROTRA AND URSILA ALI



Delhi has played a supporting role in Bollywood for decades—be it in Amar Kumar's *Ab Dilli Door Nahin*, 1957, a film that showcased the power and the political importance of the city, or in Sai Paranjpye's cult classic *Chashme Buddoor*, 1981, which made use of the city's tree-lined streets and delightful open-air public places, or more recently, in *Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!*, 2008, which peeled back the layers of power to expose the middle-class divide and all its hypocrisies. And even though it is Mumbai that most filmmakers call home, it is Delhi, with its exotic landscape dotted with historic monuments and verdant greens and idiosyncratic mix of people, that continues to bowl them over. "Although Mumbai has been the major city shown in films—given the location of the industry—it's not surprising that Delhi features more prominently given its commanding location in the north and the fact that it is the seat of the power," says Rachel Dwyer, professor of Indian Cultures and Cinema at SOAS, University of London.

As far as romance is concerned, perfectly articulating the desires of on-screen lovers are the city's many *nukkad*s and bylanes. In Shoojit Sircar's *Vicky Donor* (2012), one sees Lajpat Nagar-resident Vicky Arora (Ayushmann Khurrana) falling in love with Ashima Roy (Yami Gautam), a bank employee living in CR Park, and wooing her in locations across the city, including DDA



## ◀ CHASHME BADDOR • 1981

**Location** Talkatora Garden

Though the Talkatora Garden now remains desolate, its then Mughal-inspired fountains and a unique architectural typography made it the spot preferred by Siddhart (Farooq Sheikh) and his date, Neha (Deepti Naval), for a romantic outing.

Criminal Record Checks

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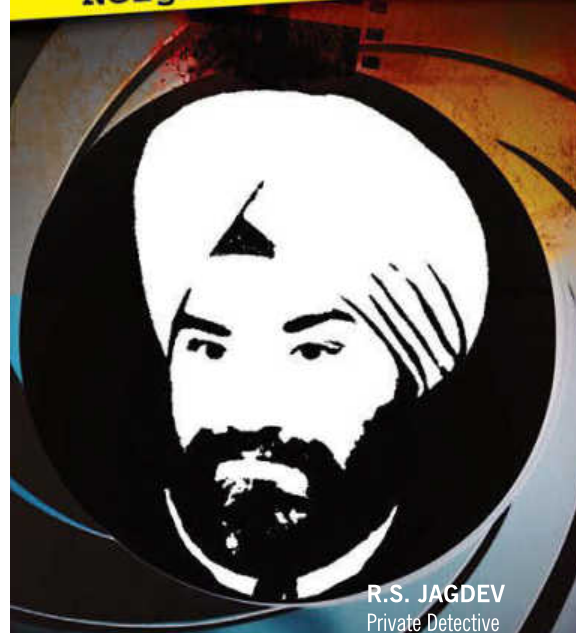
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PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF APDI

Market of Subhash Nagar and Connaught Place. Kunal Kohli's *Fanaa* (2006), the love story of a blind, morally upright girl and a hardened terrorist, uses the peaceful yet grand backdrop of Delhi's historic monuments and its mesmerising winters to create a beautiful effect. Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra's *Delhi-6* (2009) captures both the physical and the psychological characteristics of Old Delhi, infusing it with a subtle love story between protagonists Roshan (Abhishek Bachchan) and Bittu (Sonam Kapoor).

Delhi-based line producer Navmeet Singh, who has been in the industry for 13 years and have worked on films like *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag* (2013), *Bajranghi Bhaijaan* (2015), *Mardaani* (2014) and *Wazir* (2016), says Delhi's iconic spots, like its verdant gardens and historic monuments, not only become main characters in storylines, they also offer a wide canvas to experiment with. "Mumbai has been done to death. How many times will you show the same locations again and again? And the city's various associations organisations put up many hurdles. But Delhi offers a wide a canvas. The roads in Lutyens' Delhi, especially Aurangzeb and Prithviraj roads, are stunning," says the 42-year-old.



### ▼ VICKY DONOR • 2012

**Location** Connaught Place

It's in the busy inner circle of Connaught Place where Vicky Arora (Ayushmann Khurrana) waits for Ashima Roy (Yami Gautam) to say yes to his marriage proposal, while enjoying enjoying cups of coffee.

#### MALE MODEL WARDROBE

T-shirt UCB AT LIFESTYLE  
Shirt NUON AT WESTSIDE  
Jeans XOYO AT KOOVS  
Sunglasses RAY BAN  
Watch MODEL'S OWN

#### FEMALE MODEL WARDROBE

Sari JAYPORE.COM  
Cropped Top FOREVER 21  
Sandals WESTSIDE  
Bag ASOS  
Watch GUESS  
Bangle BGS







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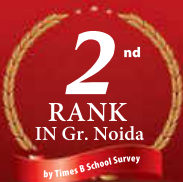
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## SIMPLY DELHI Cover Story

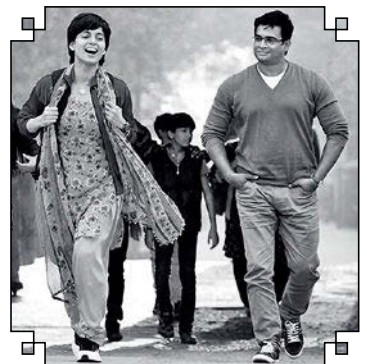


**MALE MODEL WARDROBE**  
Blazer ZARA Sweater ZARA  
Shirt NUON AT WESTSIDE  
Sunglasses RAY BAN  
Pants RARE RABBIT AT KOOVIS

**FEMALE MODEL WARDROBE**  
Jacket KAPPA AT LIFESTYLE  
Track pants NIKE Top GAP  
Sneakers ADIDAS

### ▲ TANU WEDS MANU • 2015

**Location:** Delhi Zoo  
Manu (R. Madhavan) opted for the unconventional route and took his free-spirited girlfriend, Kusum (Kangana Ranaut) out on a date at the Delhi Zoo. The zoo's landscape dotted with the ruins of the Old Fort and punctuated by animal calls, made for a perfect offbeat romantic rendezvous.



Film critic and author Mayank Shekhar agrees. "Delhi is unarguably the most beautiful Indian metropolis, something I didn't quite appreciate while growing up here, but it mildly stuns me each time I return from Mumbai," he says.

Another important factor that makes Delhi a favourite in the film industry is the horde of actors and directors who were born or brought up in the city. From acting stalwarts like Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Konkona Sen Sharma to powerhouses of direction like Anurag





MALE MODEL WARDROBE  
 Shirt ASCOT AT WESTSIDE  
 Jeans PEPE JEANS AT LIFESTYLE  
 Muffler STYLIST'S OWN  
 Bracelets PROMOD

FEMALE MODEL WARDROBE  
 Kurti top WESTSIDE  
 Pallazos ZUBA AT WESTSIDE  
 Bracelet BANSRI  
 Earrings ISHARYA

Kashyap and Vishal Bhardwaj, Bollywood legends have returned time and again to their city of birth (or their alma maters) to turn it into an impressive canvas. And then there is the city's cultural and acting hotspot National School of Drama, which has gifted priceless gems like Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri, Irrfan Khan, Piyush Mishra, Anupam Kher and many others to the film industry. Here, Simply Delhi pays tribute to the most famous romantic portrayals of the city in Bollywood. According to Shekhar, the mass exodus of talent from Delhi to Mumbai in the mid 1990s played a big hand in bringing Delhi and its landscape in the spotlight. "In storytelling, Delhi remains the natural inspiration for

### ▲ FANAA • 2006

Location Lodhi Gardens

Rehan (Aamir Khan), a terrorist who moonlights as a tourist guide in Delhi, romances the blind Kashmiri girl Zooni (Kajol) in the lush greens of Lodhi Gardens.







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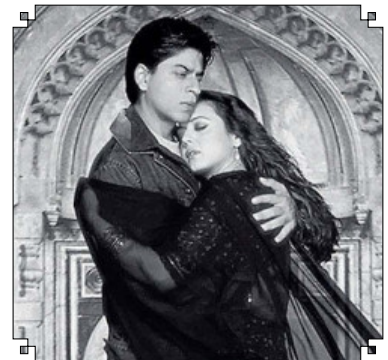
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## ▼ **VEER ZAARA** • 2004

**Location** Qila-e Kuhna Masjid, Purana Qila

The most memorable and dramatic scene of this Yash Chopra film, which also became its poster, was shot in front of the Qila-e Kuhna Masjid, Purana Qila, when Veer (Shah Rukh Khan) bids farewell to the love of his life, Zaara (Preity Zinta) and asks her to marry someone else instead.



**MALE MODEL WARDROBE**  
Jeans PEPE JEANS AT LIFESTYLE  
Shirt ISOLID AT KOOVs  
Jacket NEW LOOK AT KOOVs  
Shoes BREAKBOUNCE AT KOOVs

**FEMALE MODEL WARDROBE**  
Kurti, Churidar and dupatta set W  
Earrings W Bangles STYLIST'S OWN  
Sandals BOTTOMLINE

directors, screenwriters, actors and technicians, as far as setting and characters are concerned. Because they are from Delhi, it's the story they know best, and it works in Bollywood," he says.

Over the years, various filmmakers have attempted to look at different aspects of the city and presented them without much dilution. "To me, *Khosla Ka Ghosla!* (2006), followed by *Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!* (2008) (both by the former Delhiite Dibakar Bannerjee) are ultimate "Delhi" films, especially because of the "specimens" involved (the *jagran* singer,





### ▲ SILSILA • 1981

**Location** Lodhi Garden

It was in the serene tree-lined, mist-covered walking paths of Lodhi Gardens where Amit Malhotra (Amitabh Bachchan) and Chandni (Rekha) are seen enjoying late-night romantic walks together.



MALE MODEL WARDROBE  
Shoes ZARA Pants ZARA Pullover WEST SPORT AT WESTSIDE

FEMALE MODEL WARDROBE  
Jacket ZARA Knit Top ZARA Pants ZARA Shoes MODEL'S OWN

the sardar boy and the Hindi medium school girl in *Oye Lucky!*, for instance), and their entertainment value. They literally brought the city, through both its underbelly and facade that covers it, wonderfully to life and cinema screen. And speaking of underbelly, *Dev.D* (2009), especially the bits shot in Paharganj, is a first-rate tribute to the city," says Shekhar.

Photographs by RAJWANT RAWAT

Styling GUL GARG Makeup by JANNAT SETHI Male model SWELL Female model ASTHA